Football Premiership Wimbledon 3 Newcastle United 3

Newcastle's frailty given an airing

David Lacey

NEWCASTLE had the luck of the draw at Selhurst Park on Sunday. If any side deserved victory it was Wimbledon, who not for the first time exposed the frailty of Newcastle's defence in the air.

Having previously traded goals in league games at Wimbledon and been beaten each time — 3-2 last season and 4-2 the season before — the Premiership leaders, again five points ahead of Manchester United, still had to be reasonably pleased with the outcome. Newcastle were both watchable and vulnerable. This can be part of their charm.

The consistency with which Wimbledon turned Newcastle's defence and the way they created chances from accurate centres begged the question as to why ostensibly better sides keep losing to Keegan's team.

Few managers, however, are prepared to show the courage of Joe Kinnear and take on Newcastle with four strikers, including a 36-year-old, Mick Harford. Newcastle never really coped with Harford's enduring power in the air.

Yet at one stage the ebullient form of Les Ferdinand looked like making Wimbledon pay for an adventurous approach. Ferdinand scored two of Newcastle's goals, bringing his total to 20, and would have completed a hat-trick in the opening half-hour had Heald not kept out a header he barely saw.

Wimbledon, with two points from 10 matches, appeared to be heading down a familiar path in the eighth minute when Beresford produced a dipping cross from the left which Ferdinand flicked past Heald. By the 21st minute, however, Wimbledon were in front.

First Harford glanced a ball from Holdsworth to Goodman, whose short cross was then driven in by the advancing Holdsworth. Three minutes later Hislop failed to reach a centre from Kimble and, after Goodman had played the ball back into the goalmouth, Harford's volley went in off Ekoku's knee.

Wimbledon did not rejoice for long. A minute before the half-hour Ginola's keenly angled centre gave Ferdinand a further chance to demonstrate the exceptional timing of his shooting. Another five minutes and Ferdinand turned creator, providing a centre to the far post which Gillespie converted.

When Hislop turned a header from Harford over on the hour Newcastle may even have cherished thoughts of a win. But in the 65th minute Harford nodded back a telling cross and Holdsworth's head brought the scores level once more.

With Gayle, who had replaced Ekoku, sending two shots wide in the closing minutes after the Newcastle defence had dissolved in front of Hislop, Wimbledon came closest to winning what was, in effect, an inspired custard-pie contest.

Football results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Aston Villa 1 Arsenal 1; Blackburn 4 West Ham 2; Bolton 1 Nottm Forest 1; Leeds 0 Manchester City 1; Liverpool 1 Southampton 1; Manchester Utd 1 Chelsea 1; QPR 1 Middlesbrough 1; Tottenham 0 Everton 0; Wimbledon 3, Newcastle 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Newcastle (played 16, points 39); 2, Manchester Utd (16-34); 3, Arsenal (16-29).

ENDSLEIGH LEAGUE: First Division: Derby 4 Sheff Utd 2; Grimsby 1 Charlton 2; Leicester 2 Barnsley 2; Luton 3 Tranmere 2; Millwall 1 Watford 2; Norwich 0 Stoke 1; Port Vale 1 Huddersfield 0; Portsmouth 2 Oldham 1; Reading 3 West Brom 1; Southend 3 Birmingham 1; Sunderland 1, Crystal Palace 0, Wolverhampton 2, Ipswich 2. **Leading positions:** Millwall (20-34); 2, Sunderland (19-34); 3, Leicester (20-33).

Second Division: Burnley 2 Carlisle United 0; Swansea 0 Rotherham 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Swindon (18-38); 2, Notts County (18-35); 3, Crewe (17-34).

Third Division: Doncaster 2 Exeter 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Chester (18-37); 2, Gillingham (18-36); 3, Preston (18-35).

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Celtic 4 Kilmarnock 2; Falkirk 2 Raith Rovers 1; Hearts 0 Rangers 2; Motherwell 0 Hibernian 2; Partick Thistle 1 Aberdeen 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Rangers (16-39); 2, Celtic (16-35); 3, Hibernian (16-28).

First Division: Airdrie 1 St Johnstone 1; Dundee Utd 8 Dumbarton 0; Dunfermline 4 Hamilton 0; Greenock Morton 3 Clydebank 0; St Mirren 1 Dundee 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Dunfermline (16-31); 2, Greenock Morton (16-30); 3, Dundee Utd (16-30).

Second Division: Ayr 2 Queen of South 0; East Fife 1 Berwick 0; Montrose 1 Stenhousemuir 4; Stirling 4 Forfar 1; Stranraer 0 Clyde 0. **Leading positions:** 1, East Fife (16-36); 2, Stirling (16-30); 3, Berwick (16-27).

Third Division: Albion 1 Brechin 0; Alloa 0 Queen's Park 0; Arbroath 2 Cowdenbeath 1; Caledonian Thistle 1 East Stirling 1; Livingston 0 Ross County 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Livingston (16-34); 2, Ross County (16-27); 3, Caledonian Thistle (16-26).

FA CHALLENGE CUP: Second Round: Barrow 0, Wigan 4, Blackpool 2, Colwyn Bay 0; Bournemouth 0, Brentford 1; Bradford 2, Preston 1; Cinderford Town 1, Gravesend & Northfleet 1; Crewe 2, Mansfield Town 0; Enfield 1, Woking 1; Fulham 0, Brighton 0, Gillingham 3, Hitchin 0; Hereford Utd 2, Sutton Utd 0; Kingstonian 1, Plymouth 2; Oxford Utd 2, Northampton 0; Peterborough 4, Bognor Regis 0; Rochdale 2, Darlington 2; Scunthorpe 1, Shrewsbury 1; Stockport 2, Blyth Spartans 0, Swindon 2, Cardiff 0; Telford 0, Notts County 2; Torquay 1, Walsall 1; Wrexham 3, Chesterfield 2.

Cryptic crossword by Araucaria

Across

1,6 Flower girl, servant to editors on the Guardian during Prohibition (5-4, 5)
9 Non-stop activity of draught in which queen and corgi turn to singular charity (9, 6)
10,23 County, river, and city of old in heavy shower (8)
11 Letter to the border takes a long time: they are 27 25 (8)
14 Rendering of the town on Seine or Mississippi — it could be a devil (4, 5)
15 Didn't have a ride where the cowboys did? (5)
16 See 3
18 Rugby scrums have passages on which one may be examined (3, 6)
20 Leaves, if corrupted, the Hippocratic principle (4, 4)
21 See 3
25 See 27
26 Poets' always — that's weird (5)
27,25 Making green red, or how to do anatomy — flash in the pan? (4,5,3,4,8)

Down

1 Standing order takes in some people (5)
2 A student engineer used to be on the Trent (7)
3,4,16,10 Hush! (4, 4, 5, 4)
3,4,21,10 Don't risk getting wounded (4, 4, 4, 4)
3,4,24,10 Don't reduce speed (4, 4, 4, 4)
5 Go on about the badly paid: It means ruin (10)
6 Possibly the date for making its fortune (5-5)
7 Money earned and given in Southend (7)
8 Barren of sense, going round on standard (9)
12 Nuts from lack of nut? (5, 5)
13 Golly! Feel so bad inside, effect of cold or fear (10)
14 Chester's gallery, 5 perhaps (9)
17 He gets into space having driven a runabout (7)
19 Play after hundredth edition allowed to proceed (7)
22 Marriage portion is precise about part-ownership (5)
23 See 10
24 See 3

Last week's solution

Tennis Davis Cup final

Service industry . . . Pete Sampras takes aim during the victory over Yevgeny Kafelnikov that clinched the Davis Cup

Russia are brought down by quick-fire Sampras

PETE SAMPRAS crowned a year of high achievement by clinching the Davis Cup for the United States in Moscow on Sunday. The world No 1 defeated Russia's Yevgeny Kafelnikov in straight sets to give his team an unassailable 3-1 lead and enable his country to lift the trophy for the 31st time.

Producing what he said afterwards was his best performance on clay, Sampras blasted Kafelnikov with a fusillade of aces to win 6-2, 6-4, 7-6 in 2hr 1min for his third victory of the weekend.

After he sealed the match with another service winner in the third-set tie-break, Sampras hugged the United States captain Tom Gullikson, whose brother Tim was his coach until he suffered a heart attack last year.

"It is a great win for the team and I am happy for Tom. It has been a very emotional year for both of us and it couldn't happen to a nicer guy," Sampras said. "It has been a tough year for both of us dealing with Tim's situation."

Sampras, who had had to be carried off court because of severe cramp after his singles victory over Andrei Chesnokov on Friday in a gruelling game which lasted five sets, was in no mood to hang around. He was, perhaps, reacting to the declared intent of Kafelnikov, mindful of Sampras's cramp attack, to keep the American on court as long as possible.

The Russian's tactic was soon in tatters as Sampras, with two service breaks under his belt, secured the first set in 24 minutes. The second set lasted a little longer but brought little respite for Kafelnikov and when he lost his serve in the fifth game it proved decisive.

Kafelnikov was a far more determined opponent in the third set and after he had taken the opening game, Sampras needed seven deuces to avoid being broken in the second. However, the American then broke Kafelnikov again and held his own serve to lead 3-1.

When Sampras dropped his serve in the sixth game Kafelnikov whooped with delight and then held his own to lead 4-3. At 5-5, Sampras broke Kafelnikov again but immediately lost his own serve and the set went into a tie-break.

The Russian majority among the 14,000 crowd was now giving Kafelnikov full-throated support, but Sampras silenced them by winning three successive points using the serve-volley tactic to go 5-2 up. He reached match point at 6-3 but wasted a volley before firing an unreturnable serve down the middle for victory.

It was over all too quickly for Kafelnikov, who said: "I felt the third set was very important and if I had won it the match could have gone the other way because Pete looked tired. From the very beginning I felt I could beat Pete, that I was strong enough. But his tactic was to play the points short and you saw that his serve was faultless."

For Sampras speed was of the essence, particularly as he said his right hamstring had felt tight during the match. "It just needs rest right now but I still felt the energy was there."

Asked how the match differed from his the match against Chesnokov, Sampras said: "I was a little more patient and served a lot better. If I can maintain this level, hopefully my clay court season will be a little bit better next year." — *Reuter*

The Guardian Weekly

Vol 153, No 25
Week ending December 17, 1995

Children suffer in front line of global strife

UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund, proposed an anti-war agenda and a 10-point protection plan this week to meet the steadily increasing vulnerability of children in world conflicts, *reports Victoria Brittain*.

Civilians and children make up 90 per cent of war victims, compared with 14 per cent in the first world war and 67 per cent in the second world war. Set-piece battles by professional armies have been replaced by civil wars, often fought by whole communities with an ethnic trigger that makes any member of a different group, however young, an enemy.

In the wars of the past decade, 2 million children have been killed, 4-5 million disabled, 12 million made homeless, more than 1 million orphaned or separated from their parents and 10 million psychologically traumatised, Carol Bellamy, the new executive director of Unicef, said.

One child in four has been wounded in Sarajevo, and 97 per cent of children have experienced the trauma of shelling nearby. In Somalia during 1992, at least half of the children under the age of five at the start of the year were dead by the end of it. In Angola, a survey in 1995 found 91 per cent of children had seen dead bodies and 67 per cent had seen people being tortured and beaten.

Technological changes in warfare have had a profound impact on children, particularly in the growing numbers of child soldiers in conflicts. The Unicef report, State Of The World's Children 1996 (OUP, £5.95), says hundreds of thousands of children under 16 have fought in wars in 25 countries recently.

One of the main reasons is that modern light weapons enable children to kill with ease. An AK-47 rifle, which in Liberia or Sierra Leone costs about $6, can be stripped and reassembled by a child of 10. Warlords have found children in some ways better soldiers than adults — they are obedient, easy to coerce, do not demand pay and are less likely to run away.

In Sierra Leone this year, rebel movements recruited children forcibly and brutalised them by making them torture and kill relatives and neighbours.

Graca Machel, the former first lady of Mozambique, heads a two-year UN study of the impact of war on children, due out next year. "All of us find it hard to believe that at the end of the 20th century, children are targets, children are expendable, children are victims, children are refugees — and even perpetrators — in one conflict after another, on virtually every continent," she said.

Mrs Machel believes her study can drum up the political will to make observing the rights of children in war the rule rather than the exception.



Landmine victims in Afghanistan learn to walk with artificial limbs: Unicef is calling for a ban on the sale of anti-personnel mines

Britain opts out of nuclear power

Simon Beavis

THE expansion of Britain's nuclear power industry was called to a dramatic halt this week when executives acknowledged there was no economic case for building further multi-billion-pound reactors at Sizewell in Suffolk and Hinkley in Somerset.

The announcement, by British Energy, is the biggest setback to nuclear energy since the Government ordered a moratorium on the building of stations in 1989 and could be a watershed in Britain's 50-year experiment with nuclear power.

Environmental groups immediately proclaimed the death of Britain's nuclear power industry. But power unions accused the industry of sacrificing thousands of jobs and the long-term security of nuclear power to smooth the path for next year's planned privatisation of existing reactors.

Labour said the decision was a result of the Government's chaotic privatisation plans. The party's energy spokesman, John Battle, said: "It is time the shambles was put to an end and privatisation was halted."

British Energy is the newly formed holding company that will control the most modern reactors of Nuclear Electric and Scottish Nuclear being lined up for next year's $4.5 billion sell-off.

Eight months ago the Government ruled out providing up to $1.5 billion in subsidies to build new stations, cast doubt on private investors filling the funding gap and said it could foresee no circumstances in which nuclear reactors would compete with cheaper gas stations.

The two stations affected are the $4.5 billion Sizewell C plant — a twin reactor based on the newly opened Sizewell B station in Suffolk — and Hinkley C, a smaller $3 billion pressurised water reactor (PWR) in Somerset.

The industry argues that the Sizewell station would have created 6,000 jobs on site and 8,000 around the country during the seven-year construction.

British Energy blamed the "uncertainty" and low energy prices for its decision. Building nuclear stations would be looked at only "provided it offers an appropriate return to shareholders".

The City — which has been sceptical about privatisation — has long expected plans for new PWRs to be dropped in the run-up to the sell-off. Instead, it has been expecting British Energy to announce plans to invest in gas-fired stations, which are cheaper to build and run.

But British Energy refused to commit itself to gas. Bob Hawley, chief executive of British Energy, said: "The future of UK energy prices is insufficiently certain for British Energy to invest in new nuclear or indeed any other form of new generation in the short term. Our current priority is the successful privatisation of British Energy."

Industry sources suggested that Sizewell C could have produced power at 2.5p a unit. Although this compares well with 2.4p for the advanced gas cooled reactors being sold off next year, even this did not justify a new capital project.

Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace said Britain had built its last nuclear station. "This is the final nail in the nuclear coffin," said Patrick Green, an FoE campaigner.

Tony Cooper, secretary of the power unions' joint council, said: "Throwing in the towel on a new nuclear build programme before privatisation has even taken place clearly signals British Energy's intention to concentrate on alternative methods of electricity generation in the interests of short-term profit."

Comment, page 12

Austria	AS30	Malta	45c
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4.75
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.60
Germany	DM 6.60	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 400	Sweden	SK 18
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

IRA rejects surrender of weapons

David Sharrock and Jonathan Freedland in Washington

THE IRA last week ruled out any surrender of weapons in a highly damaging snub to the British and Irish governments' efforts to unblock the peace process through an international body on illegal arms.

In a statement issued to the BBC in Dublin, the IRA said there was no question of meeting what it called the "ludicrous demand of the surrender of weapons either through the front or the back door".

The timing appeared intended to inflict maximum damage to the newly established "twin-track" approach of the British and Irish governments. The deal between John Major and the Irish prime minister, John Bruton, was struck only a few hours before President Clinton began his morale-boosting visit to Britain and Ireland last week.

The IRA statement came on the eve of the first meeting in New York of the three-man independent commission chaired by former US senator George Mitchell, which has been established to look into the question of paramilitary arms.

The commission, which includes a Finn and a Canadian, was set to begin its work in Belfast and Dublin on December 15. The IRA's hard-line statement appears to have put the strategy's success into jeopardy.

White House aides admitted that the IRA's refusal to go along with decommissioning posed a new threat. "We're on a knife edge," one national security official said.

But an official tried to play down the statement, describing it as "posturing". "It's a negotiation. You don't expect anyone to lay their cards on the table at once," he said.

White House officials hinted that, despite the statement, they had some guarantee from Sinn Fein that the IRA would move forward on decommissioning. "President Clinton reiterated that Gerry Adams has given him cause for hope in their discussions on the twin-track process," a spokesman said. "The president has called for that and he expects that," the official said.

The IRA statement, in the name of PO Neill, says: "British bad faith and Unionist intransigence has raised a huge question mark over the potential of the twin-track approach. As we stated on September 29, there is no question of . . . meeting the ludicrous demand for a surrender of IRA weapons either through the front or the back door."

● Mr Major is due to give the peace process a fresh boost with a visit to Dublin just before Christmas for a summit with Mr Bruton.

Comment, page 12

Closer Commonwealth ties would benefit Britain

GEOGRAPHY is compelling, says Will Hutton (November 19). Forget the Commonwealth! Thank goodness he was not around for the discussions of Australian or Canadian federation. No doubt he would have argued that geography compelled the conclusion that neither could ever work because Perth is just too far from Sydney, Vancouver from Halifax. Wrong but arguable then; absurd now as the effect of geography shrinks. Perth (WA) has immediate communication with Scotland and is far closer to it in every meaningful sense than it was to New South Wales in 1900. Shouldn't the corresponding political association be that much easier now?

Some facts really are compelling. As the crow files, New Zealand is as far away from Britain as one can get but it could still put food on British tables far more cheaply than the European Union can, and without all the bureaucracy of the CAP. The typical Briton sees Australians and Kiwis as far less foreign than continental Europeans. Westminster style democracy in its "old-Commonwealth" variations is far more familiar — no value judgment intended (or at least, admitted) — than continental systems. Why are these, not to mention language and even Neighbours, not cited? All we get is a brief mention of the "shared *business* culture" (my emphasis).

With respect to the new Commonwealth, Hutton is right that imperial glory is a thing of the past. With respect to the Old Commonwealth, family ties may not be, it was a matter of choice.

I applaud Britain moving closer to Europe and I note that opening up borders to Europe has brought benefits (edible food for one) but I do not applaud closing those borders to Commonwealth countries, who used to have full access. Nor do I applaud Britain's shrewish attitude to other migrants. One of the advantages of political association with Canada and Australia would be that Britain would have to recognise once and for all, as the latter two have done, that it is now a multiracial society that needs non-racial attitudes, immigration rules in particular. I do not see the same pressure coming from the EU.

The issue today is whether the others would still consider a closer association with Britain. My guess is that it is probably too late. A model with Britain as just one member of a federation, as liable to be outvoted by the others as Ontario would be, might be acceptable to the prospective partners. And more acceptable, I suggest, to the British public than a federal Europe with Britain vulnerable to being outvoted by its European partners.
Brian A Jones,
Brooklyn, New York, USA

Messianism's threat to Israel

MARTIN WOOLLACOTT'S comments on the role of Orthodox Jews in Israeli politics (November 19) ignores a vital element of the religious Zionists' position: messianism. This powerful religious belief is of no little importance in understanding Israeli extremism.

During the British mandate, in the early days of the Israeli state, and even today, the Orthodox have been split into two camps: those who rejected the Zionist state as being without divine sanction or legitimacy, and those who accepted a Jewish state without divine sanction.

The latter, the religious Zionists, found a justification for their position in the thought of Israel's first chief rabbi, Rabbi Kook. He accepted the secular foundation of Israel as being a precondition and preparation for the messianic age. By establishing a new Jewish commonwealth, the secular founders of Israel were doing divine work which facilitated the coming messianic period. The religious Zionists, therefore, recognise the state of Israel as "the dawn of our deliverance".

With Israel's 1967 victory, locales associated with the biblical patriarchs, including Hebron, fell under Israeli occupation. Religious Zionists saw the Israeli victory as divine work, a miracle which heralded the messianic era. Religious Jews of the diaspora, especially those of the United States, were spurred to emigrate to Israel in anticipation of, and to hasten, the coming of the Messiah.

The policies of Rabin were not simply the reduction of subsidies to residents of the occupied territories, and not just their transformation from "assets" to "obstacles to peace". In the the minds of a significant number of religious Zionists, Labour's policies constitute an assault on the the advent of the Messiah. Where policies once supported the religious vision, Labour's policies now deny the possibility of the speedy arrival of the Messiah. The recent occupation of nearby hilltops by the residents of Efrat, the cries of "treason" and "Nazi" aimed at Rabin had little to do with security and much to do with a faith central to thousands of Israelis.
Arthur Tenenholtz,
Brooklyn, New York, USA

Inconsistency in nuclear debate

AS ONE of Moruroa's near neighbours, I was intrigued by your report of John Major's position on the Commonwealth statement ("N-Test stance angers Major", November 19), and dismissal of his colleagues as "intellectually inconsistent and unbalanced". In the interests of intellectual consistency, I commend to Mr Major the following solution to the ongoing waste disposal problems of the British nuclear industry:

Choose a suitable island off the shores of Britain . . . Lewis in the Outer Hebrides comes to mind, but there are plenty to choose from; drill a very deep hole and detonate a "nuclear device" at the bottom of it; drill a second hole into the resultant blast chamber and feed pulverised nuclear waste down it until full, then cap with concrete; repeat the process — the French tell us this can safely be done dozens of times over — until the radioactive waste is confined in the same blast chambers which, we are assured, so superbly contain the radioactivity of the blasts themselves. when finished, follow the French lead . . . suggest that it become another Club Med (or Butlins).

We can safely assume that none of this is going to happen; the risks and consequences of pollution are simply too great. But Mr Major, if it's too dangerous for your backyard; for your marine environment, and for your people, then how, pray, can it be considered so safe for my (Polynesian) children? Cook Islanders and those in the French Polynesia have lived through fallout from both British and French nuclear tests; are we now supposed to sit idly by as a fractured atoll is charged with still more of the world's most dangerous poisons. As the man who encouraged the dumping at sea of Brent Spar please demonstrate again to all of us here your own "intellectual consistency" with a trial blast or two under an island near you.
Tim Arnold,
Rarotonga, Cook Islands

Genes given too tight a fit

LIKE Jan Kevlin (November 26), many behavioural scientists are worried about the recent upsurge of naive genetic determinism and reductionist biological explanations for human behaviour. The discovery of the gay gene, or the aggression gene (which received an equal amount of press coverage a couple of months ago), illustrates the success of contemporary molecular genetics in finding genes affecting almost every aspect of human psychology.

More often than not, however, findings of different research groups are conflicting, and detailed analysis reveals the limited effect genes really have on human behaviour. One leading scientist recently declared that research into heritability is actually the best demonstration of the importance of the environment.

More than 40 years ago, psychologists started to produce an enormous body of scientific work demonstrating the plasticity and environmental malleability of human behaviour, providing us with a powerful antidote to the then ruling genetic determinism views. For a while it seemed they were on their way out, but now, due to the tremendous popularity of molecular genetics and gene technology, they are back with new vigour and vitality.

Scientists need to inform the public about the real, limited and non-determining influence of genes.
Dr Rudi D'Hooge,
Laboratory of Neurochemistry and Behaviour, Born-Bunge Foundation, University of Antwerp, Belgium

Fear for World Service's future

WE ARE greatly concerned to learn that the funding for the BBC World Service is being cut (December 10). Its news service and educational programmes will be of critical importance during the coming years. This is especially significant in Africa, as the struggle to reinstate democracy proceeds.

For the long-term prospects of the UK and the Commonwealth, it will be critical to foster English language training and skills-transfer programmes relevant to business. All this will be placed in jeopardy unless the World Service is encouraged and funded to continue its good work.
D C Thorne,
Commonwealth Trust, London

CUTS in funding to the World Service will do nothing but harm to Britain's reputation abroad. Whenever I travel, as an MP or private citizen, I encounter praise and admiration for the World Service. Its work and reputation must not be threatened for the sake of short-term fiscal considerations.
(Dr) Kim Howells MP,
House of Commons, London

Briefly

THE BBC has, albeit a year apart, treated us to the unedifying spectacles of a prince as a "kiss and tell" character, and a princess as an "untrustworthy mother" character, betraying a moment of supreme confidentiality with her son.

We can only hope the BBC will not again lower its standards by wasting valuable air time on the self-indulgence of confession, accusation and betrayal of the most privileged in the land.

I think there are a few more worthy Brits to interview: men and women who have made it on their own, through courage, determination and brightness of spirit.
Jan Marjoribanks,
Cambridge, MA, USA

SOME years ago my employer decided to set up an action group looking into the issue of providing equal opportunities for men and women at work. As a member of this group, I have since been amazed and deeply saddened to find that most hurtful attacks on women invariably are made by members of our own sex.

It is still quite beyond my comprehension why this should be. Perhaps Jill Aktas from Dhahran, Saudi Arabia can enlighten me for she offered such a perfect example in her letter (December 3) suggesting that the Princess of Wales's children would be taken into care were she not who she is.
Marianne MacKenzie,
Horgen, Switzerland

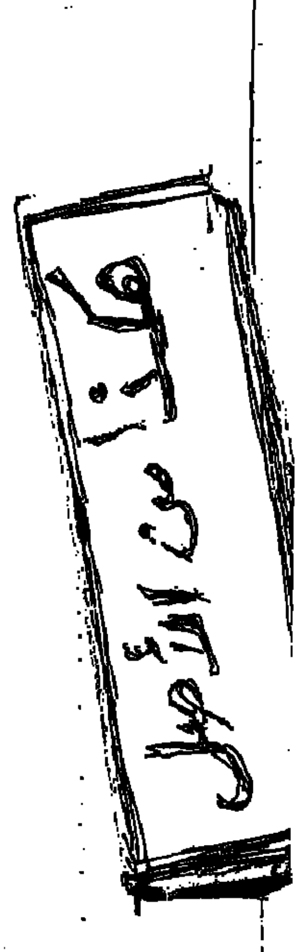
I AM heartened to know that your contributor Martin Kettle (Comment, December 3) is willing to think the unthinkable in regard to the Rosemary West case. "It is hard", he writes, "to feel that their lives had absolutely nothing to do with the sexual deregulation of a deregulated era." This is the first time I recall any writer in the Weekly questioning the liberal orthodoxy about sexual deregulation. I hope it will not be the last time.
Graham Heath,
Welwyn Garden City, Hertfordshire

CHRISTOPHER PAIN (November 26) complains about Nestlé advertisements franked on letters by the Post Office. He could use a black envelope — obtainable at up-market stationers — with a small white address label. A cheaper alternative, perhaps, would be to blacken the top two inches of the address side.
John Orford,
Misamis Oriental, Philippines

WHICH agency of the United Nations will be responsible for sending observers to Tibet, to ensure a free and fair reincarnation?
Timothy Poston,
National University of Singapore

The Guardian Weekly
December 17, 1995 Vol 153 No 25

Annual subscription rates are £47 (United Kingdom); £52 (Europe inc. Eire); £55 USA and Canada; £60 Rest of World.
Letters to the Editor and other editorial correspondence to: The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. Fax: 44-171-242-0985 (UK: 0171-242 0985); e-mail: weekly@guardian.co.uk



Doubts over funds for Bosnia mission

Ian Black in London and Paul Webster in Paris

FRANCE at the weekend rejected pleas by relatives of two missing airmen to suspend signing ceremonies for the Bosnia peace agreement in Paris this week unless the Bosnian Serbs responded to an ultimatum demanding firm news of the men's fate by Sunday night.

With the deadline close to expiry, Paris appeared to dilute the strong stand it had taken 48 hours earlier. It had threatened "multiple", although unspecified, consequences unless the pilots' captors and their political leaders produced solid information on Captain Frederic Chiffot and Lieutenant Jose Souvignet, shot down over Bosnian Serb territory in August.

The foreign ministers of both Germany and Russia reinforced the French demand that the men be found and released. But in Paris, officials ruled out a delay in the signing, and any idea of a reprisal bombing raid.

Highlighting the fact that the Bosnian peace process is rolling ahead regardless, the first group of United States marines to be sent to Sarajevo landed on Sunday.

The two dozen men will be part of the security detail for Nato headquarters commanding the 60,000 troops, including 20,000 US soldiers, enforcing the peace agreement.

However, funding for the Nato force is still uncertain and a struggle is also likely over the raising of the billions of dollars needed to rebuild Bosnia after the London peace implementation conference at the weekend sketched out the scale of the reconstruction task.

Forty countries and a dozen international organisations promised "a substantial contribution on the basis of appropriate burden-sharing" — but there are already indications of disagreement over meeting even initial goals, with key donors such as the United States and Germany showing signs of balking.

According to the World Bank, which is due to co-ordinate the donor effort, $4.9 billion will be required over three years to repair war damage and revive Bosnia's shattered economy.

Beyond the vague language of the conference's final communiqué, some promises of immediate help have already been given: Japan announced a $20 million contribution and Britain has committed $1.5 million for urgent repair projects.

In the next few days, a three-month emergency programme will be costed and funded at a meeting in Brussels between the World Bank and the European Commission, but a broader pledging conference will not be held until February or March.

Most significantly, the US has already made it clear it is not happy with the idea that it should pay one third of the total cost, with the remainder shared equally between the European Union and Japan.

No formal announcement has been made, but Washington has suggested it would contribute about $600 million — less than one eighth of the World Bank estimate.

US officials have stressed that they are having enough trouble selling their 20,000-strong troop contribution to the Nato force to a reluctant Congress without also having to take up the lion's share of reconstruction costs.



Bitter harvest . . . Serbs in a suburb of Sarajevo destroy a US flag at a protest against the Dayton peace deal PHOTOGRAPH: ENRIC MARTI

Madeleine Albright, the US ambassador to the United Nations, gave an early hint of the problems ahead when she warned that Bosnians who break the peace or elude war-crimes tribunals will forfeit aid. "Reconstruction funds are not a right," she said.

Signs that governments might not put their money where their rhetoric is brought a veiled warning from the World Bank's high-profile president, James Wolfensohn.

"If the World Bank is to be effective, we cannot be the sole financier," Mr Wolfensohn said at the weekend. "We're prepared to co-ordinate and put in the lead financing. We'll do this as long as others come along."

Diplomats say Germany is also anxious not to end up paying a disproportionate share of the reconstruction bill. Britain has said it might pay about $60 million.

The Clinton administration and the Republican leadership made common cause last week in the face of a Senate revolt against sending troops, after Senator Robert Dole was forced to withdraw his draft resolution in favour of deployment because of lack of Republican support.

President Clinton, assured earlier by Mr Dole that the deployment would have bipartisan support, now faces the prospect of going it alone.

Washington Post, page 15
Le Monde, page 20

'Cash buys policy' in South Af

David Beresford in Johannesburg

THE reputation of Nelson Mandela as an international statesman is being thrown into question by evidence of a link between South African foreign policy and donations to African National Congress funds.

President Mandela's office has confirmed that Taiwan made a donation of more than $9 million to the ANC and is giving other financial assistance, despite previous denials from the Taiwanese and South African governments.

Confirmation of the donation — apparently raised by Mr Mandela on a visit to Taiwan's capital, Taipei, in July 1993 — follows a briefing he gave to a group of political scientists recently at which he explained Pretoria's reluctance to abandon diplomatic ties in favour of Beijing.

He is reported to have cited the donation as evidence of friendship between the two countries, saying he could not return such favours by "stabbing them in the back".

Mr Mandela's extraordinary admission fuels suspicions about other instances of links between cash gifts and foreign policy favours. It has been strongly rumoured that General Sani Abacha's regime made a cash donation of about $4 million during Mr Mandela's visit to Nigeria to help the ANC fight last year's elections. The Mandela administration was bitterly criticised for its policy of "constructive engagement" with the military junta — until the recent execution of nine Ogoni dissidents.

The ANC is known to have received substantial cash donations from the Moroccan government, which could explain Pretoria's recent reluctance to honour promises to recognise the Polisario Front's Saharawi Republic.

Fund-raising also appears to have been a factor behind Mr Mandela's two controversial visits to Indonesia, in defiance of its abysmal human rights record on East Timor.

His failure to appreciate the truism that there is no such thing as a free lunch is reflected in the assurances he gave to political scientists last week that the money which came from Taiwan was "a donation and not a bribe".

Meanwhile, a goodwill visit by the United States vice-president, Al Gore, has turned sour, with the public furious over the antics of his security staff.

The media last week reported anger among Cape Town residents at a 40-minute traffic jam on a motorway from the airport to the city caused by Mr Gore's cavalcade travelling at 14mph, accompanied by a low-flying helicopter. The US secret service compounded the chaos by insisting on slip roads being closed until Mr Gore's party had passed.

Mr Gore's behaviour was compared with that of Mr Mandela, who travels the same motorway when he is in Cape Town, but with only two security vehicles in attendance.

US officials also managed to antagonise Frene Ginwala, the parliamentary Speaker, by insisting that her meeting with Mr Gore in Cape Town had to be private, despite her protests that South Africa was a "transparent society". She was told Mr Gore would walk out if the press was allowed into the meeting.

Juppé's talks with unions fail

Paul Webster in Paris

TRADE union leaders confirmed that another national anti-government demonstration would go ahead on Tuesday, after talks with Alain Juppé, the French prime minister, failed to produce a breakthrough.

Mr Juppé told journalists after a day of consultations that he had instructed Jacques Barrot, his social affairs minister, to start talks with unions and employers next week to prepare for a "vast meeting on employment".

The consultations were held on the 18th day of the national rail strike against a background of continuing stoppages in urban transport, schools, postal sorting offices and other public sector areas. The previous evening he agreed to negotiate directly with union leaders for the first time and made concessions on railway pensions and a plan to cut the national rail network.

But the stumbling block to end the damaging industrial protest was a refusal to discuss changes to social security cuts.

Louis Viannet, leader of the Communist-led CGT trade union, was the first union official to meet Mr Juppé on Monday. He said that because the Gaullist prime minister would not withdraw social security reforms there was no choice but to go ahead with the marches.

Marc Blondel, leader of another prominent union, Force Ouvrière, said Mr Juppé did not appear to be in favour of all-embracing negotiations, which were the only way of ending the dispute.

Mr Juppé's room to manoeuvre is restricted by unrest inside the Gaullist RPR, of which be is chairman. A powerful anti-European lobby, led by Charles Pasqua, the former interior minister, has said his policies should be changed.

Speculation on Mr Juppé's possible departure increased this week after the results of seven parliamentary byelections. The opposition gained five government seats in a sharp swing over widely dispersed areas.

● Germany and France last week launched a joint drive for fast-track European integration, proposing that faint-hearts and Euro-sceptics be allowed opt-outs that would leave European Union enthusiasts to push ahead on their own towards political union.

"Temporary difficulties of a partner in keeping up must not impair the union's capacity to act and its opportunities for progress," Chancellor Helmut Kohl and President Jacques Chirac said, in a pointed reference to John Major's government.

Le Monde, page 19

Roh 'took $370 million'

Kevin Rafferty in Tokyo

SOUTH KOREA was thrown into turmoil last week when the former president Roh Tae-woo and 12 leading industrialists were charged with bribery.

A senior prosecutor, Ahn Gang-min, said in a live television broadcast that Mr Roh, who has already confessed to creating a $660 million slush fund when he was president between 1988 and 1993, was charged with accepting $370 million in bribes. All but about $105 million of the slush fund had been accounted for, and his office had applied for permission to seize all Mr Roh's assets, he added.

The indictments extend the clean-up by Kim Young-sam, the first civilian president of South Korea for more than 30 years. They threaten to split the ruling party and throw business into disarray.

Mr Ahn announced that 12 businessmen, including the heads of seven of the country's biggest conglomerates, had been charged with giving bribes. They include Kim Woo-choong, chairman of Daewoo, and Lee Kun-hee, chairman of Samsung — both among the top 200 companies in the world — each accused of giving almost $30 million.

Mr Ahn said that 35 businessmen had been identified as having given bribes totalling $370 million, but he had decided to prosecute only the 12 responsible for clear criminal action. To protect the economy, they were not detained in custody, he said. The Seoul stock market, which had been in the doldrums, rose on this news.

The 12 face prison sentences of up to five years if convicted. Mr Roh could get up to 10 years.

South Korean politicians depend on business donations to stand for office, but the rules are not clear. Several leading businessmen, notably Chung Ju-yung, founder of the Hyundai conglomerate, who ran against President Kim in 1992, complained that giving big donations was the price of survival.

The "miracle" which has lifted South Korea's annual per capita income from $90 to $9,000 in 30 years and made it the 11th biggest economy in the world is due to the conglomerates.

But politicians resent their dependence on industry and regularly threaten to trim the conglomerates, thus encouraging more donations as the price of staying in business.

Sceptics in Seoul claim that President Kim has ordered the clean-up to try to restore his sagging political fortunes. His approval rating has fallen from 90 per cent shortly after his inauguration in 1993 to 30 per cent.

He has always presented himself as "Mr Clean". But the fact that he left the opposition to ally himself with then President Roh in 1992 leaves him vulnerable within the Democratic Liberal Party to supporters of Mr Roh and Mr Chun.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995

The Week

A CAR BOMB blamed by officials on Basque separatists [illegible] district, killing [illegible] employees and injuring a dozen people four days before European leaders gather for a summit.

AUTHORITIES in Pakistan ordered a judicial inquiry after the bullet-riddled bodies of Nasir Hussain, aged 60, and 28-year-old Arif Hussain, brother and nephew of Altaf Hussain, a London-based leader of the ethnic Mohajir National Movement, were found outside Karachi.

THE Angolan president, José Eduardo dos Santos, held emergency talks with senior advisers in an attempt to patch up the peace process after the opposition Unita movement threatened to pull out because of government attacks in the north.
Washington Post, page 16

INDIA is to provide the Dalai Lama with a bullet-proof Mercedes car, and post guards at his home in Dharamsala as part of a £750,000 security package introduced following the arrest of three alleged Chinese spies.

THE Japanese prime minister, Tomiichi Murayama, has filed a lawsuit to force Okinawan landowners to renew leases on land used by the United States military, after failing to convince them to do so voluntarily.

THE UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, José Ayala Lasso, visiting East Timor's capital Dili, called on the Indonesia-appointed government to step up dialogue with local people to help solve human rights problems. More than 100 East Timorese and Indonesian sympathisers are holed up in the Russian and Dutch embassies.
Comment, page 12

THE JORDANIAN authorities have arrested the country's leading Islamist critic of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty on charges of *lèse majesté* and sedition. The opposition, secular as well as Islamist, called the arrest a new landmark in dismantling democracy.

A UN General Assembly panel deplored human rights abuses in Burma and called on the Rangoon government to begin a proper political dialogue with the Nobel Peace Prize winner, Aung San Suu Kyi.

VENEZUELA'S government announced a massive 41 per cent devaluation of its currency, the bolivar, as part of a tough economic adjustment programme.
Le Monde, page 20

SIR JAMES DARLING, Australia's most esteemed headmaster, whose pupils included Rupert Murdoch and Kerry Packer, has died, aged 95.





Trigger happy . . . A Palestinian woman joins the celebrations in the West Bank town of Tulkarm on Sunday after the evacuation of Israeli forces
PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID SILVERMAN

US seeks Israel-Syria accord

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

HAILING a "fundamental new reality" between Israel and Syria, President Clinton on Monday revealed that he had, in effect, acted as intermediary between the two countries' leaders.

Mr Clinton announced that his secretary of state, Warren Christopher, would leave for Damascus immediately after the Bosnian peace accord is signed in Paris on Thursday — his first shuttle mission to Syria in six months.

Welcoming the Israeli prime minister, Shimon Peres, on his first visit to Washington since the assassination of his predecessor, Yitzhak Rabin, last month, Mr Clinton said he had telephoned Syria's President Hafez al-Assad to brief him on his talks with the Israeli leader.

"President Assad told me he was committed to do his best to move the peace process forward and to reach an early agreement between Syria and Israel," Mr Clinton said. "Nothing, nothing will deter us from this task in the weeks and the months ahead."

The Israeli leader struck an equally upbeat tone. "Syria, together with us, stands in a unique position to contribute to a peaceful Middle East," Mr Peres said at a White House news conference.

The president attributed the improved atmosphere to Mr Rabin's death. "Sad as it is to say, I think the Syrian leader and the Syrian people now see the exceptional price that former Prime Minister Rabin and Prime Minister Peres have been willing to pay for peace. I think that is the fundamental new reality here," he said.

The move follows two visits to Damascus and Jerusalem by an envoy from the state department, Dennis Ross, who told Washington that both sides were now serious about peace.

Sources close to the Israeli leader indicated that Mr Peres has opted to delay detailed negotiations with Syria in favour of a broad agreement of peace that could be signed as early as the spring.

Mr Peres is calculating that, with one year to go before elections in Israel and the US, Mr Assad will conclude that he has little time to waste. The Israeli leader is apparently keen to postpone discussion of the precise security arrangements that would follow an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

For Mr Clinton, a third Middle East peace deal, after Israeli pacts with Jordan and the PLO, would be invaluable in an election year.

The prestige of a White House appearance presented a chance for Mr Peres to establish himself with the Israeli public as Rabin's heir.

Obligingly, Mr Clinton, who had eulogised the slain leader as a friend, turned to Mr Peres and said: "I pledge to you personally, Shimon, that I will be your partner in peace."

● Israeli forces handed over the West Bank city of Nablus to Palestinians on Tuesday, 24 hours ahead of schedule and under cover of darkness.

Japanese whalers 'use electrocution'

John Keeble

A TOKYO court is expected to award damages and costs totalling $430,000 this week against a British journalist who revealed how Japanese whalers slowly electrocute harpooned whales.

The case is being brought by the Japanese Institute of Cetacean Research as its boats begin this year's kill of 440 minke whales in the Southern Ocean sanctuary.

Photographs taken by a freelance journalist, Mark Votier, show minke whales thrashing in agony as a low-voltage electrical charge slowly kills them. "If I had not released the film, I could not have lived with myself," Mr Votier, now living in London after seven years in Japan, said on Monday.

Before the five-month trip ending in April 1993, he signed a contract with the institute, which is licensed and part-funded by the Japanese government. The agreement prohibited Mr Votier from releasing film showing "unsightly tasks" and instructed him to submit material for censorship. The institute's suit accuses him of breach of contract.

He submitted film but did not delete scenes of minke whales being harpooned and electrocuted before selling it to television companies and then giving it to animal welfare organisations. "I betrayed the friendship of a lot of people," he said. "I felt awful but I had to do it: I had to show this terrible cruelty."

Mr Votier, aged 38, said whales were harpooned away from their heads to preserve their hearing system, from which age can be calculated. Those not killed outright — about half — were lashed to the catcher boat and slowly electrocuted, taking as long as 23 minutes to die.

Mr Votier was also concerned that whales were not dead when they were cut up on the factory ship. Scientists use a very small part of the animal and the rest goes to the Japanese food market.

Chinese migrants killed

John Gittings

CHINESE migrant workers have been shot and killed in a riot near the Hong Kong border after clashing with local Chinese who are growing rich on their labour.

Police in the Shenzhen special economic zone opened fire with automatic weapons, according to Hong Kong reports, after the impoverished peasants from central China brawled with villagers.

Four people died from the clashes which took place last weekend, causing at least 100 casualties. Migrants complained that hospitals were demanding large cash payments before they could be admitted for treatment.

"In the eyes of the police, we are worse than dogs," one migrant worker told Hong Kong's Oriental Daily News.

The economic zone has taken off in the past decade largely by using cheap peasant labour from outside to attract foreign investment and fuel a construction programme.

In many villages, the original inhabitants now live at Hong Kong standards, employing migrant workers to farm their fields or work in rural sweat-shops.

The trouble started in Longgang, 20 miles from the Hong Kong border, when a Shenzhen man drove his motorbike over a stretch of new road being surfaced by migrant labourers.

Villagers rushed to his aid as a brawl developed. Rioters are said to have stormed the local Communist Party headquarters while police counterattacked with automatic weapons.

Migrant workers in Guangdong are now believed to number 12 million — one-sixth of the indigenous population. For years migrants have been a regular sight in village and town centres, squatting at the roadside in hope of employment.

But the migrants are now blamed for a growing crime wave and kept under much tighter control. They are not allowed resident status and must carry three separate identity cards at all times.

Many of the migrants in Longgang come from the neighbouring inland province of Hunan, where average wages are less than one-fifth of Guangdong rates.

Kenya police 'rely on torture'

Greg Barrow in Nairobi

KENYAN security forces still use torture as a basic investigative technique despite international condemnation and campaigning by human rights groups, says Amnesty International.

In a report out this week it says criminal suspects, political prisoners and opposition activists are systematically tortured for confessions and denied medical treatment. "The pattern of abuses documented by human rights groups throughout the 1980s and early 1990s appears to be continuing," a team of Amnesty medical experts said after visiting Kenya in March. They questioned former detainees and examined the medical records of 16 alleged torture victims.

The most common tortures include beatings with sticks, fists, handles of hoes and gun butts, as well as simultaneous blows to ears to cause extreme pain, according to the report. Suspects are regularly suspended upside down and the soles of their feet beaten as the wounds heal quickly and detection can be avoided. The report says torture injuries are compounded when authorities refuse to take victims to hospital or allow doctors to visit detention centres.

Women have been victims of violent sexual humiliation, it says, highlighting the case of Alice Mariga Ashioya, a former detainee who says a policewoman forced a bottle containing pepper into her vagina in an attempt to draw a confession that she had murdered her husband. Such torture normally coincides with a threat to smash the bottle.

Amnesty says torture is continuing because the security forces still appear to be above the law. "As long as the Kenyan government continues to allow the security forces to act with apparent impunity, its commitment to the effective protection of human rights must be called into question."

Moses Wetangula, an MP of the governing Kanu party of President Daniel arap Moi, conceded that "isolated" police abuses did take place, but disputed the size and scope of the problem: "There are gross exaggerations in the Amnesty report and to some extent it's outrightly false."

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995

Polish church comes unstuck

Election victories by ex-communists are forcing a rethink, writes **Matthew Brzezinski** in Lichen

THE Mary of Our Saviour Sanctuary inspires awe in all who see it. Its gold-leaf trim and intricate ornamentation exude the power and beauty of God. It silently enjoins submission from the million pilgrims who go there each year. And it is not even finished yet.

Here, on the site where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared in the 19th century, one of the biggest churches the world has ever seen is rising. When completed, its nave will seat 7,000. Its dome and tower will dwarf Notre Dame in Paris. Its dimensions will be second only to St Peter's basilica in the Vatican.

Critics of the project say it is an arrogant display of clerical wealth in a country pauperised by the transition from communism; a medieval symbol of an institution that has refused to change with the times.

Catholic voters last month sent Poland's Church that same message. They elected as president Aleksander Kwasniewski, a former communist whom the Church had virulently attacked.

The hierarchy's response fell just short of a declaration of holy war. "The choice was between Christian values and neo-paganism," roared Cardinal Jozef Glemp. The prior of the Jasna Gora monastery, Poland's holiest shrine, vowed its gates would be closed "to the people of the hammer and sickle; proponents of a civilisation of death, abortion and atheism".

Mr Kwasniewski's victory over the devout Lech Walesa, for whom priests campaigned from every pulpit, came as a blow to the moral authority clerics once held over this ultra-Catholic country.

During the struggle against communism, the Church acted as a rallying point for the opposition. The destruction of the communist edifice, however, denied the Church that role. But it sought to use its leverage with newly-elected politicians. Crucifixes replaced portraits of Marx in government offices. A strict anti-abortion law was passed. Sex education was scrapped in schools and replaced by compulsory religious instruction.

In 1993, the deputy prime minister, Henryk Goryszewski, told parliament: "I don't care if Poland becomes a capitalist state. I don't care if there is freedom of speech or democracy. It is not even important if Poland is rich or poor. All that counts is that Poland is a Catholic state."

The return to power of the former communists after parliamentary elections in late 1993 was partly an anti-clerical backlash by voters.

But the Church demanded that Catholic values be incorporated into a draft constitution. It condemned the drive for European Union membership, and pressured the left-dominated parliament to ratify a concordat with the Vatican — signed by the previous government — that granted the Church special privileges. When the governing coalition refused this summer, the Church launched an all-out offensive against Mr Kwasniewski. But the assault backfired, particularly with young voters.

After suffering defeats in the last two elections, and seeing churches empty, the hierarchy has been forced into soul-searching. The 280th Conference of the Episcopate on December 1 was punctuated by Polish bishops wailing over their mistakes. They vowed a gentler Church would retreat from politics.

Marlboro man holds a smoking gun

Mark Tran in New York

A LEAKED confidential memo from Philip Morris last week blasted a hole in the tobacco industry's claims that nicotine does not make cigarettes addictive.

The internal report from Philip Morris, manufacturer of Marlboro, bluntly calls cigarettes a "nicotine delivery system". It says that the main reason people smoke is to get nicotine into their bodies and that nicotine is chemically "similar" to such drugs as cocaine.

The document, which is undated but cites data from as recently as 1992, is a proposal for a "safer" cigarette with the code name Table.

Philip Morris has played down the significance of the report, asserting that it was written by a non-scientist and did not reflect the views of the company. The task force working on Project Table was disbanded in 1992.

Despite Philip Morris's denials, the leak is sure to provide ammunition for lawsuits against tobacco companies. Plaintiffs' attorneys and four states have filed lawsuits alleging that tobacco companies have known for years that smoking is addictive but have concealed this information.

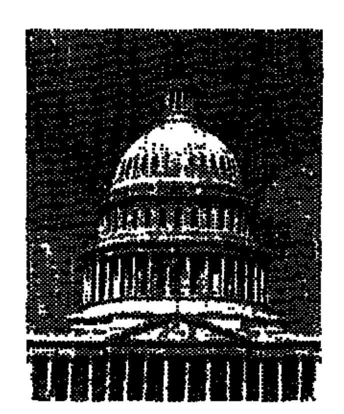
The tobacco industry is also under pressure from the Food and Drug Administration, which is seeking to regulate cigarettes as drugs. The FDA argues that main purpose of cigarettes is to supply nicotine to smokers — a conclusion firmly rejected by the industry.

In recent congressional testimony, tobacco executives described nicotine in very different terms.

In April, William Campbell, then head of Philip Morris's tobacco unit, said: "The presence of nicotine, however, does not make cigarettes a drug or smoking an addiction."

A federal grand jury is now trying to determine whether any cigarette company executives or scientists may have perjured themselves in congressional testimony or other sworn statements on nicotine addiction.

Baby boomers in perfect harmony



The US this week

Martin Walker

IT MAY not look this way from the mutual denunciations between the Republican Congress and the White House over the budget, but the New Democrat Bill Clinton and the New Republican Newt Gingrich are not very far apart on their underlying approach to the future shape of American government. A new paradigm is being formed to replace the New Deal-Great Society model which has defined American governance for 60 years.

The principles of this new governing model are broadly shared by President Clinton and by Speaker Gingrich. The deficit must be shrunk, and the budget balanced, but funding for the Pentagon should remain close to cold war levels. Medicare and Medicaid must be reformed before the rising demographics of old people bankrupt the system. Crime must be fought with more police and more prisons, and welfare must be limited to two years, and in Clinton's phrase become "a hand up, not a way of life". Government itself must be slashed and made far more entrepreneurial.

The double consensus on domestic and foreign affairs which has governed the country since the Roosevelt years has crumbled. At home, it was based on the New Deal, and extended by Lyndon Johnson's Great Society. Abroad, it was based on robust internationalism, of alliances and far-flung garrisons, to confront the Soviet menace.

Clinton has been the first president since Roosevelt to confront the collapse of the old consensus, and to try to devise new ones. On examination, the Clinton domestic model turns out to be so similar to the Gingrich model that they are hunting any possible ways to distinguish themselves, battling over "values" and personalities, and the tangles of campaign funds in Arkansas in the mid-1980s, and of Gingrich's Gopac in the early 1990s.

The old domestic consensus around New Deal and Great Society came under siege during the Reagan presidency, but was preserved by a Democratic Congress. Clinton's role in destroying it was initially shrouded by his deep faith in the potential of activist government. But his election manifesto of 1992 was uncannily close to what became the Republican "Contract with America" in 1994.

Clinton campaigned on a middle-class tax cut and a balanced federal budget within five years. He demanded "an end to welfare as we know it", and a re-invented government that would be smaller and more entrepreneurial. Clinton explicitly challenged the Great Society model which had been the core of the modern Democratic party's identity. He lifted whole phrases from Ronald Reagan's text book ("Governments don't raise children; parents do") and pledged to be tough on crime in a classically authoritarian way, from 100,000 extra police on the streets to "three strikes and you're out", lifetime imprisonment for repeated felonies.

Clinton insisted that he was a New Democrat. With little caricature, this could be defined as one who rejected the traditional wimpishness of the bleeding-heart liberals, and recognised that those blue-collar patriots who abandoned their Democratic loyalties to vote for Reagan were essential to Democratic hopes of regaining the presidency.

The issue here is less whether Clinton meant his rhetoric, but the degree to which he explicitly repudiated the traditions of the Democratic party and the old consensus. Consider, by contrast, the electoral platforms and the practice of the Republican presidents of the New Deal era. Eisenhower had presided over the most classically Keynesian programme of public investment in post-war America, the building of the interstate highway network and the crash programme of higher education after the shock of Soviet technological superiority with the first Sputnik satellite of 1957.

Richard Nixon remained firmly within the New Deal and Great Society consensus. Nixon declared himself a Keynesian, imposed unprecedented peacetime controls over prices, wages and imports, and sought to expand the welfare state with a bill for a national health insurance system and another for a minimum family income.

"Putting People First", Clinton's 1992 campaign manifesto, declared: "Our policies are neither liberal nor conservative, neither Democratic nor Republican. They are new. They are different." He denounced the "brain-dead policies of both parties" and charted the outlines of a new consensus, located in what he called "the dynamic centre". In his first two years, he was to be frustrated by the Democratic Congress, although some successes were scored. The "re-inventing government" project run by Vice-President Al Gore shrank the federal work force to its smallest since the Kennedy administration, before the Great Society was launched. Clinton is now confronted by a Republican Congress which, ironically, is proving far more ready to join him in the emergent new domestic consensus.

There is much shadow boxing for party political purpose between the Republican Congress and the Clinton White House. But in the arguments over balancing the budget within seven years or in nine, or whether to increase Medicare premiums to a Republican $84 a month or a Clintonian $76 a month, there are distinctions without much of a difference. Now Clinton has offered his own plan for a balanced budget within seven years, including a modest tax cut. It is based on some rosy assumptions about the economy, and the Republicans have denounced it, but the similarities in their approaches are far more significant than their rhetoric of confrontation. The national security consensus of active internationalism, which had prevailed since the second world war and throughout the cold war, also began to crumble under Clinton's presidency. The collapse of the Soviet Union and the subsequent enfeeblement of Russia took the enemy away. The new model which Clinton devised, with the strong support of Republicans led by Gingrich, calls for the US to take the lead in promoting the new global economy based on free trade. It remains an internationalist vision, albeit based far more on exports and overseas investments than on military alliances and security commitments.



The uncanny similarities between Clinton and Gingrich, the two sides of the baby-boomer coin, deepened last week in a gloomier way. Speaker Gingrich was awarded that accolade of Washingtonian distinction, his own independent counsel. Gingrich will now be investigated by a special lawyer appointed by the House ethics committee.

This is a growing industry. Presidents Reagan and Bush were investigated by independent counsel into the Iran-Contra scandal. President Clinton is being investigated by an independent counsel into the Whitewater affair. Clinton is also being investigated by Senator Alfonse D'Amato's Senate banking committee, which is threatening subpoenas to find out who said what at meetings between the president's private lawyers and his legal team at the White House counsel's office. They are claiming client-attorney privilege, and this matter is heading for the courts.

The House government operations committee is also preparing subpoenas to investigate the sacking of the White House travel office staff. These are being resisted by the White House and by Clinton's Hollywood producer friend, Harry Thomason, so this too is heading for the courts.

There is no doubt that the White House is stonewalling, as the editorial writers of both New York Times and Washington Post said last week. Nor is there much doubt that these two congressional committees are engaged in fishing expeditions. The Republicans are looking for material that will continue to embarrass the president, and maybe find the elusive evidence that can finally ignite the whole Whitewater-Arkansas issue into something that will catch the public's attention.

The independent counsel business is being overdone, becoming a ritual form of harassment against political foes. It drains and distracts those against whom the weapon is targeted, and adds to that broad presumption of guilt which is afflicting those foolish enough to go into political life. The politicians all investigate one another, and wonder why the public increasingly distrusts the entire profession.

The Republicans on the ethics committee fought a broadly successful rearguard action to limit the inquiries of the independent counsel to a college course taught by Gingrich. This course became the basis for the book To Renew America for which Rupert Murdoch's publishing company was prepared to offer $45.5 million in advance royalties. Having made perhaps a third of that sum, the book is now being sold on special discount, which leaves it but a short shelf from the remaindered list.

THE QUESTION is whether the college course was designed to advance a political agenda, and thus broke the tax laws when Gingrich's research and study and teaching were financed by tax-deductible contributions. This opens the interesting field of the Progress and Freedom Foundation, Gingrich's own think-tank. The more implacable Democrats believe this will be the way to prise open the shadowy world of what they see as a sinister conglomerate of Gingrich Intellectual and Political Enterprises Incorporated.

The smart money says that Gingrich will keep his congressional seat, and his speakership, but lose his reputation. He will probably be rapped over the knuckles and fined by the federal courts for the loose accounting between his Gopac organisation and his own personal re-election expenses. But he will be tarred by the process, weakened and made the more controversial.

Politics these days hinge on demonisation. What the pollsters call Clinton's "strong negatives", the numbers of people who do not want to vote for him under any circumstances, are a consistent 40 per cent. (For President Reagan, they were in the range of 20-25 per cent.) Gingrich's strong negatives are in the mid-60s, which makes him the most disliked American politician since Nixon in the month before he resigned the presidency rather than face impeachment.

The political choice is coming down to which of the two, Gingrich or Clinton, the voter hates the more. Last autumn, Republicans across the country made use of a common technique in their TV ads. Called "morphing", it featured the face of their Democratic opponent in the congressional race. By using computer graphics, this image slowly turned into the face of Bill Clinton. In a special election for a congressional seat in California, the Democrats are now using this morphing technique to turn the Republican candidate into Newt Gingrich.

No matter that this Republican candidate, Tom Campbell, is a liberal fellow who expressly repudiates much of Gingrich's "Contract with America". No matter that he actually sounds very like Clinton, in his support for abortion rights, gun control and environmental conservation. The new rules of political demonisation have little time for such niceties. If he can be beaten with the tactic of guilt by association with Gingrich, so be it.

There are many reasons why this should be, including the growth of the profession of political consultant, hired guns who use psychological techniques, communications theory and any other halfway useful skills to ensure that their client wins at any cost. But the underlying reason is that the American system is undergoing a fundamental change, and the politicians are desperate to maintain a distinctive party image within it.

Nazi echoes haunt Austrian elections

A rightwinger who says that Hitler's policies on employment were 'sensible' has dreams of becoming chancellor. **Denis Staunton** reports from Vienna

WHEN Austria's far-right politician Jörg Haider visited the Simon Wiesenthal Centre in Los Angeles, he was shocked to see his own picture alongside those of Idi Amin and Saddam Hussein in a display of modern tyrants.

His friend and political adviser Klaus Heiss says it is all a big mistake. "The Jörg Haider I first met in 1988 has come a long way since then, and he's a democrat right down to the roots. I think it's just stubbornness that makes him refuse to take back that remark about Hitler's employment policies."

Has the man who had to resign as prime minister of Carinthia in 1990 after praising the Führer's "sensible" policies changed? That question is being asked as Austria prepares for federal elections on December 17 amid predictions that Mr Haider's party is running even with the other two.

Ask Mr Haider himself and his blue eyes open wide as a sweet, innocent smile spreads over his face. "I have nothing whatever to do with Hitler. I am a committed, freedom-loving person and an opponent of every authoritarian, totalitarian regime. In fact, I'd probably have been locked up under National Socialism because I am fundamentally unable to accept a system of violence."

But the man who regularly addressed Wehrmacht and Waffen SS veterans' rallies remains unrepentant about the remark.

According to Hans-Henning Scharsach, a Viennese political analyst who has written two books about Mr Haider, "there are two Jörg Haiders. When he's on television, he plays the super-democrat. But when he is addressing his supporters he has to give them what they want to hear. He has said many of these things. He described the Austrian nation as 'an ideological monstrosity', the term Hitler used in Mein Kampf."

In Mr Haider's spacious office in Vienna, two pictures take pride of place. One is a photograph of himself with that other Austrian strongman, Arnold Schwarzenegger; the other is a loud abstract painting dominated by the figure 98. This refers to 1998, the year he speaks of as "the great hour" of Die Freiheitlichen, when he believes he will become Chancellor.

Haider's populist message, calling for a complete halt to immigration, opposition to the Maastricht treaty and an end to the privileges enjoyed by members of the big parties, won him 22 per cent of the vote last year. If he improves on that, his party will emerge on December 17 as Austria's largest.

"If they are the biggest party, the president will have to invite Haider to form a government. He probably won't be able to, so the result will be another grand coalition. That will allow Haider to emerge stronger than ever in a few years' time," says Mr Scharsach. At 45, his youthful good looks have started to fade but, casually dressed in cream-coloured jeans and a midnight-blue polo shirt, Mr Haider still cuts a more dashing figure than his rivals. He has a direct, engaging manner as he outlines his views on democracy, Europe and, above all, immigration.



Face values . . . 'He did not lie to you' says the slogan, but Haider gets a daubed moustache PHOTOGRAPH ROLF SEYBOLDT

"What England is allowed to do, what America is allowed to do, what Canada is allowed to do, little Austria — which is in the middle of Europe and is a particular point of attraction for immigrants — must be allowed to do. We must be able to decide how many immigrants we can accept," he says.

Not only does Mr Haider want to stop immigration to Austria, he would cut benefits for those already in the country and introduce voluntary repatriation. "When I read reports of British conditions, where some cities in England have violent clashes between indigenous young people and second-generation immigrants who remain rooted in their own culture and haven't been fully integrated, I am convinced that a cautious immigration policy makes sense," he says.

Before the election campaign began, his party placed posters all over Vienna denouncing leftwing artists such as the director of the Burgtheater, Claus Peymann, and the playwright Elfriede Jelinek. The poster, illustrated with a violin and a bow, listed five names and asked: "Do you love these, or art and culture?". Mr Haider dismisses the outrage the poster caused, claiming it was meant as a joke, but makes no secret of the fact that he regards culture as a legitimate target for his clean-up of Austrian society.

"We must do everything we can to make sure that art and culture don't become playthings in the hands of ideologues and don't become an instrument to create a cultural hegemony in society," he says.

Mr Haider has friends in Britain among the Conservative Eurosceptics, but the foreign contacts he cherishes most fondly are with the Republicans in the United States. His most vociferous advocate in Washington is the Austrian-born economist Heiss, who is coordinating a drive to win support for Mr Haider from expatriate Austrians.

He says that nobody has anything to fear from a Haider government. He claims to number Jews, blacks and homosexuals among his friends and insists that all he wants is to restore normality to Austrian political life.

But Mr Scharsach, whose latest book traces the links between Haider's party and neo-Nazi violence, said: "I don't want anything to do with Haider's normality. As far as I can see, it is the normality of National Socialism." — *The Observer*

Galileo finally comes to a perfect end around Jupiter

Tim Radford

THE spacecraft Galileo is in orbit around the giant planet Jupiter, having delivered — apparently perfectly — a 100,000mph "suicide" probe into the depths of the planet's dense atmosphere.

Last week scientists were hailing the mission as a success. "Is this a great day or what?" Nasa chief Daniel Goldin asked the mission controllers at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California.

In fact, the full answer is yet to come. Galileo went into perfect orbit, and scientists know its antenna was locked on to the space probe as it began its 75-minute descent to oblivion, amid the unimaginable temperatures and pressures around the solar system's biggest planet.

The probe did transmit data about the make-up and composition of Jupiter's atmosphere, and that data was captured by Galileo. Nasa didn't get the message until Sunday, when the somewhat accident-prone spacecraft began relaying the first 43 minutes of data back to Earth.

Galileo's launch, conceived nearly 20 years ago, was delayed by the Challenger shuttle tragedy in 1986. When finally put aloft in 1989 it had been redesigned without the rocket equipment to accelerate it to a proper speed, and had to be "wound up" by gravity slingshots from the orbits of Venus once, and Earth twice, before it could complete its 2 billion mile ride to Jupiter.

On the way, its antenna failed to open properly. Then, as it neared Jupiter, its tape recorder faltered temporarily. As a result, only a tenth of the hoped-for pictures and data can be relayed across the 600 million or so miles to Earth, and it could be weeks before details of the probe's descent can be analysed.

Although the probe is the most dramatic part of the exploration, Galileo has much more to do in the two years it will orbit the planet. It will make close encounters with Ganymede, Callisto and Europa, three of the 16 Jovian moons, before eventually itself perishing in the ammonia embrace of Jupiter's atmosphere.

To date, only Mars and Venus have been similarly explored. Astronomers last week were almost in orbit themselves. Carl Sagan, one of the architects of the Mars probe, called the moment "epochal in the history of planetary exploration".

Others were less measured. "What can I say? It just bubbles right up from the gut," said Wesley T Huntress, Nasa's associate administrator for space science.

"You wait 18 years. When it gets close to that moment you sweat. Then . . . tears come to your eyes, you throw your hands up. That's what makes this business so exciting."

Crew jailed for murdering stowaways

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

A RARE light was cast on the cruel plight of Third World stowaways aboard ships bound for Europe when a French court on Sunday found five Ukrainian crewmen guilty of murdering eight Africans at sea.

In a legal first in France, a Rouen court sentenced the captain and first mate of the Bahamas-registered MC Ruby to life imprisonment for ordering the killings off Portugal in 1992. Three other crew were each jailed for 20 years for bludgeoning them, shooting them and dumping their bodies at sea.

The case, which ran for four weeks and was interrupted after the captain attempted to kill himself, was brought only because a ninth stowaway, Kingsley Ofusu from Ghana, escaped the massacre and hid on board for three days.

He told the court the stowaways, including a Cameroonian, were discovered by members of the 23-strong crew three days after the container ship left Takoradi, Ghana, on October 24, 1992.

Mr Ofusu, a 25-year-old docker, said: "We had to leave our hiding place to find water. They moved us to another part of the ship. One of us was killed straight away."

Mr Ofusu, who is married with two children, said the remaining stowaways, including himself, were tortured by four crewmen.

"One night they asked us to walk out on to the bow deck in groups of two or three. It was pitch black. They beat each of us with iron bars and the butt of a rifle," he said.

Mr Ofusu said that, out of fear, one man threw himself in the ocean. The others were shot with an M16 machine gun and their bodies dumped.

He said one crewman, whom he identified as Dzhamal Arakhamiya, hit him over the head with an iron bar. "I came to before they could shoot me dead and ran away with bullets whistling around me."

He endured a three-day manhunt, during which crew members laid flour on walkways to pick up footprints and put trip wires between containers. He said he had to drink his own urine.

Several days later he realised he could no longer feel the vibrations of the ship's engines. He ran across Le Havre port to the police station. On November 8, six men were charged with murder or accessory to murder.

The Ukrainian captain of the ship, Vladimir Ilnitsky, aged 60, and the first mate, Valery Artemienko, aged 34, denied ordering four crewmen to carry out the killings. But after 12 hours of deliberations, the jury of 13 people found them guilty of murder and they were jailed for life.

Three Ukrainian crewmen, Oleg Mikhailevsky, aged 35, Petr Bondarenko, aged 36, and Sergei Romashenko, aged 34, admitted carrying out the attacks and killings but said they did so under orders from Mr Artemienko. They were sentenced to 20 years in prison each for attempted murder, murder and kidnapping. The jury acquitted Mr Arakhamiya, aged 33 — the man Mr Ofusu claimed hit him with an iron bar.

The prosecution had urged the court to sentence all the defendants to life "to make it clear to ship owners, charter companies and ship captains that the ocean is also subject to the rules of justice". He called Ilnitsky a man "who forbade nothing, a Pontius Pilate who seeks refuge in false innocence".

The trial raised questions over how current the practice is of throwing stowaways overboard. The prosecution claimed the crew were motivated by the fear of punitive action by Vlassov, the Monaco-registered company which chartered the ship.

Vlassov was not called to give evidence but Guy Morel, managing director of MC Shipping, a Liberia-registered company which owns the vessel, denied that crews were punished for carrying stowaways. He confirmed, however, that charter companies, like airlines, are fined by immigration authorities when stowaways are discovered.

Mr Ofusu claimed that one member of the crew, a "chief officer", took £1,700 from the stowaways, but police failed to identify the man.

Mr Ofusu has stayed in Le Havre and recently signed a film deal with a US company. Police said he was one of 205 stowaways to land in the port in 1992. He wants to obtain immigration papers for himself, his wife and two children. He said on Sunday: "We wanted to come to Europe, like so many, to start new lives. I would like to study to be a mechanical engineer." He has worked in a Le Havre restaurant but is currently unemployed.

The MC Ruby has been sold to a Belgian company and now sails under the name CMB-T Eagle.

The Week in Britain James Lewis

Blair's education policy fails to win over teachers

EDUCATION policy, which has long been an ideological hot potato, will undoubtedly be a major issue in the next general election campaign. But, for once, the two main parties share a near consensus of what needs to be done. So, when the Labour party unveiled its latest plan for improving schools, it infuriated the teaching unions because of the way it reflected present government thinking.

Until Tony Blair became the Labour leader, the party's policies reflected those of the unions, which saw smaller class sizes as a priority. But the new policy asserts that "small classes do not guarantee good education".

Mr Blair also promised that there would be "zero tolerance of failure" by an incoming Labour government, which would sack ineffective teachers and close bad schools.

Labour proposes a raft of measures to encourage more effective schooling: a General Teaching Council to boost professional standards; a new qualification for head teachers; and homework targets for seven-plus pupils. It differs from the Tories in that it would restore some — mainly cosmetic — links between local councils and those schools which have opted out of local authority control.

These plans are seen by Mr Blair as a 10-year "crusade". But as Labour and Tories vie to be seen as the toughest on standards, teachers fear they will become "whipping boys". One union leader warned that there was "not a snowball's chance in hell of realising these plans without substantial additional expenditure".

Labour declines to name a figure, saying that education spending "will depend on economic circumstances". Britain spends less per pupil than other OECD countries, but what is spent is a higher percentage of national income.

THE RED CARPET was rolled out at London's Euston station when the Royal train was handed over to its American buyer, the Wisconsin Central Transportation Company, which also runs New Zealand Railways. Its purchase package includes Rail Express Systems, the British Rail subsidiary which carries mail.

The Government had rushed through the sale to beat a threatened judicial review which could have delayed its rail privatisation programme.

A campaign group, Save Our Railways, representing local authorities and unions, demanded a review because, it claimed, private operators were not being required to honour ministerial promises that the level of services would be maintained. But the High Court ruled that there had been no illegality, so the franchising of the rest of the rail network can now go ahead.

THREE MEN were shot dead in what was believed to be a gangland execution. They were found in a Range Rover in a lonely part of Essex, which has become a black-spot for violent, drug-based criminality. The area lies between Harwich, one of the main entry points for drugs from the Netherlands, and the traditional stamping ground of organised crime in East London.

The three men had all served prison sentences for robbery and violence and were under police surveillance for suspected drug-dealing. Their deaths were thought to have been contract killings commissioned by rival dealers.

In an unrelated incidence, a 60-year-old security guard, John Killick, was stabbed to death by a masked attacker who jumped out of bushes near the Asda supermarket where he worked in Scunthorpe. The motive was thought to have been robbery.

PSYCHIATRIC PATIENTS are being urged to challenge the common belief that the right to vote does not extend to royals, peers and "lunatics". The mental health charity, Mind, is advising patients detained compulsorily under the Mental Health Act that, contrary to Home Office guidelines, they can qualify to be included on the electoral register.

The Home Office insists that detained patients cannot register to vote because they have no place of residence. They cannot register under their home address, or the address of the hospital where they are detained. But, illogically, they can vote while in hospital if they were registered before being detained.

After taking legal opinion, Mind is challenging the Home Office guide lines which, it claims, is not supported by the Representation of the People Act.

THE DUCHESS of York was said to have taken a "relaxed attitude" when she learned of the theft, at New York's JFK Airport, of a diamond necklace and bracelet, worth up to £250,000, which was a wedding gift from her mother-in-law, the Queen.

She certainly took a relaxed approach to the safety of the jewels — they travelled in the unlocked baggage of her "dresser", Jane Dunn-Butler, on a British Airways scheduled flight while the duchess flew Concorde.

The jewels were rapidly traced to the garden shed of a JFK baggage handler whose sister had compared them to the sparklers in a Macy's catalogue and reckoned they might be "worth up to 300 bucks".





Knocking on heaven's door . . . Dr David Hope enters York Minister by its West Door PHOTO: DON McPHEE

Challenged prelate is enthroned in style

WITH a grin and a look of mild disbelief, Bishop David Hope returned to his native northern England last week and a dignified enthronement as the 90th Archbishop of York.

Swapping his London flat for an 18th century palace on the River Ouse, the Church of England's second most senior prelate went out of his way to acknowledge small and polite knots of demonstrators outside the towering Minster.

Arriving in stately procession at its great West Door, he declined a leaflet from Action for Gay and Lesbian Ordination but only because he had one at home.

The solemn and majestic ceremony had faced disruption earlier in the week, with talk of an Outrage! "outing" inside the building. But the group — which this year was influential in Bishop Hope's public description of his sexuality as a "grey area" — promised not to go ahead, and the protests outside were low-key and respectful.

The new, Wakefield-born archbishop did not refer to homosexuality or the ordination of women in his first sermon, concentrating instead on feeling "extremely pleased, and in a way, relieved to be back in my native Yorkshire". The ceremony brought the Church and state establishment out in force, with the Duke of York and Sir Marcus Worsley, Lord Lieutenant of North Yorkshire in the procession.

Nigerians left in despair in the season of goodwill

Vivek Chaudhary

THE MESSAGE of peace and goodwill has been a little difficult to stomach for Joyce Onibiyo in the run-up to Christmas, despite being a devout Christian.

Seven weeks ago her husband Abdul, a campaigner against the military dictatorship in Nigeria, was deported back and nothing has been heard of him since.

Last week she was at Gatwick airport's detention centre waiting to say goodbye to her son Ade, aged 20, after being told that he too was about to be deported.

Mrs Onibiyo, aged 54, said: "We were waiting to see him when the solicitor received a telephone call saying that he had been given a last-minute reprieve. I wasn't expecting that decision. I honestly thought that he would be sent back like my husband."

Lawyers representing her son were given five working days to prepare an application for a judicial review on the deportation decision but Mrs Onibiyo knows that the agony will not end there for her or her family, whatever the outcome.

"I have been told that I will also be deported and so too will my youngest children, aged 13 and 17. It's like living with an axe over your head. Life is agony for me.

"Not only am I worried about my son and husband but I'm also worried about the future of my whole family. I just feel that everything is being taken away from me. My whole life has shattered around me and I just feel totally depressed."

Mr Onibiyo was a member of the Nigerian Democratic Movement in London and attended several meetings and demonstrations against the military dictatorship. "The Government is hypocritical. They denounced what happened to Ken Saro-Wiwa yet they deport men like my husband. Ken was a high-profile figure and look what happened to him. So what's going to happen to someone like my husband or son? The Government knows what happens in Nigeria but they won't admit it. My husband loves his family and wouldn't go six weeks without contacting us."

Since Mr Onibiyo's deportation and his son's arrest seven months ago, Mrs Onibiyo has been told that her youngest daughter needs counselling to cope with stress. Last week, she went to Downing Street to hand in a petition and remembers seeing the Christmas tree outside No 10.

"Its symbolic message of peace and goodwill seemed a little ironic. There has been no peace and goodwill extended towards us. My son is being held like a prisoner and our lives have been ripped apart. I sometimes wonder if people in government have families."

● A second Nigerian asylum-seeker facing deportation was given a last-minute extension last week by the Home Office to allow a legal challenge. The deportation of Abiodun Igbindu, aged 25, a pro-democracy activist, was postponed for 14 days while further representations were made on his behalf. But the two cases follow the removal of 229 other Nigerians to Lagos this year after claiming asylum.

Diana's talk upsets Tories

THE Princess of Wales last week put John Major on to the defensive over the politically sensitive issue of homelessness, in her first set speech since she launched her bid for an independent "ambassadorial" status, *writes Edward Pilkington.*

The princess inflamed backbench Conservative opinion in an address to the homeless charity, Centrepoint. She spoke in emotive terms about the "wasted lives" of young homeless people and said teenagers were being forced into begging and prostitution in order to survive.

Anthony Steen, Tory MP for South Hams, said that by agreeing to appear on the same platform as Jack Straw, the shadow home secretary, the princess had shown "how vulnerable she is to the influence of those who want to exploit her unique position for party political ends".

Patrick Cormack, Tory MP for Staffordshire South, said: "Either she is very badly advised or she doesn't take advice."

Buckingham Palace played down the suggestion that the princess had strayed into political waters, saying the engagement was arranged several months ago.

Princess Diana said society must ensure young people were given the chance they deserved. Teenagers aged 16 and 17 were forced to resort to begging "or, worse, prostitution to get money in order to eat".

The speech is bound to be interpreted as a provocative gesture — it came two days after the Prime Minister's weekly audience with the Queen at which they are believed to have discussed the princess's demand for an ambassadorial role abroad.

Government to investigate school security as heads report worsening violent behaviour

Teacher's murder sparks safety probe

Guardian Reporters

A SEARCH for measures to tighten security at schools in the wake of the murder of a headmaster outside his west London comprehensive school began on Monday when Gillian Shephard, the Education and Employment Secretary, met head teachers' leaders to discuss escalating violence.

She asked for an urgent report on the implications for the organisation of schools of the death of Philip Lawrence who was stabbed when he intervened to protect a pupil from a gang of youths outside St George's Roman Catholic school in Maida Vale last week.

On Sunday police released a letter to Santa from his son, Lucien, aged eight, in which he writes: "I wanted to have a telescope but I now want to have my daddy back because without my daddy to help I will not be able to see the stars anyway."

The Prime Minister was said to be "appalled and shocked" by the killing. Cardinal Basil Hume, leader of Catholics in England and Wales, conducted Mass at the school on Monday. The cardinal said later he had reminded pupils and staff of the text from scripture: "No greater love hath a person than to lay down his or her life for a friend. That's what he did . . . The word friend was the right word because this was a headmaster who was a friend to all his pupils."

Cardinal Hume said he had offered prayers for the murderer: "My advice to him is to report to police at once. He needs to acknowledge his crime and pay his debt to society."

A Scotland Yard spokesman said they were sifting through numerous statements taken from pupils and others over the weekend.

Meanwhile, leaders of the Secondary Heads Association will discuss with Mrs Shephard her proposals for tackling expulsions, which increased from 2,900 in 1990 to an expected 14,000 this year as heads reported worsening violent behaviour.

John Sutton, the association's general secretary, said the meeting would now focus on the security issue. He agreed with proposals by Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, and Jack Straw, his Labour shadow, that tougher laws against carrying knives might be desirable.

But there were few reports of knives in school and Mr Lawrence was killed outside the gates. Problems of law and order affected society as a whole and were not particularly an educational matter. "I cannot think what we can ask of Mrs Shephard which she would be in a position to deliver," he said.

Mrs Shephard said: "I am appalled by this tragic case . . . and will be considering the case urgently with the local education authority and the diocesan representative.

"Although I understand it took place outside the school premises, Mr Lawrence's courageous action was a supreme example of his profession's dedication to the well-being of their pupils."

The Home Secretary described the attack as "absolutely appalling" but said he would not change the law on carrying knives as a "knee-jerk reaction to one event, however dreadful".

Gang rivalry takes a more sinister turn

Vivek Chaudhary and Duncan Campbell

TEENAGE gangs and inter-school rivalry have been a feature of adolescent life for decades and form a central part of many adults' memories of school days.

What concerns teachers and criminologists is not the existence of gangs but the increased use of weapons, particularly knives, and the effects of a culture in which young people see weapons as status symbols.

Sixteen thousand teachers are reportedly attacked in Britain every year, while 10,000 pupils were expelled from schools last year for various offences including carrying weapons.

Criminologists say that it is not unusual for school gangs to borrow the names of adult gangs.

According to some weekend reports, Philip Lawrence was stabbed when he went to intervene in a fight between a gang called the SW Triads, made up mostly of Filipino youngsters, and the Brixton 28, which takes its name from a south London Yardie gang.

Jock Young, professor of criminology at Middlesex University, said: "The fact that youngsters go around calling themselves Triads or Yardies is not of any significance. It does not mean that they are linked to wider, international criminal groupings. The fact that these formations exist is not unusual. The problem is the use of weapons.

"They are seen as fashionable and as a normal way of defending yourself. That's what really needs to be tackled."

School gang fights can have trivial causes but can also be about drugs or activities such as playground trading in stolen goods. Race is often a factor, whether black against Asian, Chinese against black, white against black, or any combination of these. In some areas, religion is also a motivation. Last year, there were clashes between Sikh and Muslim gangs at schools and colleges in west London.

Prof Young said: "The tendency is to try and gain some status for yourself, and the easiest way to do that is to divide yourself along racial lines. When you have groups of youngsters who are marginalised you get a strong macho culture. Youngsters forming gangs is always going to be a feature of school life."

Tories 'in dock' over dirty tricks

Guardian Reporters

ALLEGATIONS that Conservative Central Office has embarked on a campaign of dirty tricks to try to lift Tory poll ratings gathered force this week after claims that it was behind a series of leaks designed to embarrass the party's critics.

One senior Tory said that the distinction between party politics and government business had become "dangerously blurred" and that behind-the-scenes tactics employed by Central Office could seriously devalue the Government's credibility. "As we get closer to the election I think things could get a lot worse," he said.

The Labour leader, Tony Blair, bitterly attacked the "Tory lie-machine" and the allegations of Labour "dirty tricks" in his Sedgefield constituency. He rounded on the Tory party chairman, Brian Mawhinney, for "subverting government" by having his press officer brief journalists on an immigration case, normally the preserve of the Home Office.

But the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, was scathing about Mr Blair's complaints. "The Conservative party's fighting back and the Labour party don't like it," he said.

It later appeared that the leak by Central Office of a promised crackdown on judges, which the Lord Chancellor was forced to deny, had caused a serious cabinet rift, and had plunged relations with the judiciary to an all-time low.

It emerged that the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor, played a key role in the Lord Chancellor's denial of a Daily Telegraph story last week that he was about to warn the judges not to overstep the mark in quashing ministerial decisions.

Lord Taylor was said to be furious at the headline — "Judges warned to keep in line" — over a leaked preview of a draft speech Lord Mackay insisted he had no intention of making.

The Lord Chancellor sent an angry protest letter to the paper's editor denying that he would ever warn the judges "not to overstep their powers by using judicial review to quash ministerial decisions", and mounting a strong defence of judicial independence.

Lord Mackay, whose delicate position as both cabinet minister and head of the judiciary has been made all but impossible, asked Dr Mawhinney to explain. What seems to have happened is that an attempt by Lord Mackay to heal the rift has backfired to the Government's embarrassment. The Lord Chancellor had prepared a draft speech attempting to clarify the roles of the judiciary and the executive in the face of Tory MPs' and ministers' accusations that judges were over-reaching their authority.

He had hoped to deliver it at a Guildhall dinner, and circulated it to cabinet colleagues. But he discovered that he was expected only to propose a toast. Dr Mawhinney, under the impression that the speech was to be delivered, passed it on to Central Office, who used it to brief the Telegraph.

It seems ironic John Major considered that Dr Mawhinney, the tough-talking political heavyweight he appointed in July to run the Conservatives' election campaign, would succeed where the affable but gaffe-prone Jeremy Hanley had failed.

In his keynote speech to the Conservative party conference in October Dr Mawhinney delighted the party faithful by condemning a decision by Labour-controlled Camden council to fund Camden Hopscotch Asian Women's Group, as evidence of "loony-left" political correctness.

But his joke backfired when it emerged it was a serious community project funded by the Home Office and Save the Children teaching mainly Bangladeshi women basic literacy and language skills: the Princess Royal had opened the group's new premises.



In Brief

FIGURES show that paramilitaries have carried out five times more punishment beatings since the Ulster ceasefire than in the 14 months preceding it.

ROSEMARY WEST is to appeal against her conviction on 10 murder charges.

THE APPEAL court has reserved judgment on Sara Thornton's second appeal. She was jailed for murder in February 1990 for killing her husband. Michael Mansfield QC, for Thornton, argued that the trial judge failed to give due emphasis to provocation.

A BOY in Durham became the latest victim of meningitis in outbreaks which have recently claimed eight young lives.

BRUTALITY and mishandling of racist violence by British police is a "serious human rights concern" according to the New York-based Human Rights Watch organisation.

RENNIE KINGSLEY, who claims that police planted cocaine on him, accepted £76,000 damages from the Metropolitan police, which brings to more than £400,000 the damage settlements connected with Stoke Newington police station in north London.

SCIENTISTS have found no evidence that PVC mattresses contribute to cot deaths by producing deadly fumes.

THE CHANCELLOR unveiled a new two-tone £2 coin along with a new 50p piece, due to enter circulation in 1997.

LAWYERS representing three men convicted of murdering newsboy Carl Bridgewater are preparing judicial review proceedings against the Home Secretary after he indicated the case would not be sent back to the Court of Appeal.

BRITAIN ordered the expulsion of a Libyan diplomat accused of monitoring dissidents, but there was said to be no link to the murder of a prominent exile in London last month.

THE FIRST and only black trooper in the Queen's Household Cavalry, Mark Campbell, signalled his intention to leave amid suggestions that he has been the target of racial abuse.

THE GOVERNMENT is to increase the "safe drinking" limit to allow an extra three and a half pints of beer a week and officially declare that alcohol can be good for the heart.

THE COCKNEY comedy actor Arthur Mullard has died in hospital, aged 85.

Branson makes lottery bribe allegation

Andrew Culf
Media Correspondent

A ROW erupted this week between Richard Branson and Camelot, operator of the National Lottery, after he alleged that one of its shareholders tried to bribe him.

The Virgin Group chairman, whose non-profit making bid for the lottery was unsuccessful, said on a BBC Panorama programme that he had been offered an inducement to withdraw the bid.

He said Guy Snowden, chairman of the American GTECH Corporation, with a 22 per cent stake in Camelot, visited his west London home to make the offer. Mr Snowden said the claim was beneath contempt and grossly defamatory.

Mr Branson said: "I was so flabbergasted that actually I went out to the loo and scribbled what he said on a piece of paper and I just couldn't believe that I'd heard it . . . no one's ever tried to bribe me before in my life."

He said the meeting took place on September 24, 1993, three months before the closing date for applications to run the lottery, which now makes a profit of £1 million a week for Camelot.

Mr Branson claimed Mr Snowden had said: "Well, I don't know how to phrase this Richard — there's always a bottom line. I'll get to the point. In what way can we help you Richard?"

Mr Snowden issued a statement saying: "I did not attempt to bribe Richard Branson, nor did I offer him any form of improper and unlawful inducement. Had I done so, Branson would have been under an obligation to report that fact to the Office of the National Lottery and the police . . . Of course, if Branson had reported it, the Camelot bid would have been destroyed . . . It is beneath contempt."

Mr Branson insisted that he had informed Peter Davis, the director-general of the Office of the National Lottery.

His claim was backed by John Jackson, chief executive of Sketchley, who said he was present at the meeting two years ago. He also attended the meeting at which Mr Branson raised the matter with Mr Davis.

Meanwhile, Mr Davis admitted to MPs on Monday that he had taken five free trips in the United States in a private jet owned by GTECH.

Asylum list draws fire

Alan Travis

THE initial white list of countries from which asylum applications will be presumed to be bogus will include India, Pakistan and Ghana, the Home Secretary told the Commons on Monday.

Michael Howard said that these and the others on the list of seven — Bulgaria, Cyprus, Poland and Romania — were all countries in which there was "no general serious risk of persecution" and which generated significant numbers of asylum claims.

The announcement came before the vote on Mr Howard's package to clamp down on bogus asylum seekers and illegal immigrants. MPs voted 314 to 287, a government majority of 27, rejecting a move to send the Asylum and Immigration Bill to a standing committee, which the Opposition proposed as a way of removing political heat from the issue.

The bill drew strong Opposition protest and criticism from Amnesty International. This year there have been 7,980 applicants from the seven white list countries, of which only 85 have been granted refugee status or exceptional leave to remain.

Amnesty International said: "It is absolutely ridiculous to assume that those countries have a clean bill of health on human rights. We have serious concerns about all the countries on the list."

Hugo Young, page 12

Jobs that are not for the boys

Larry Elliott

WANTED: skilled TV engineers willing to spend next summer twiddling away at video recorders. Polite manner essential. Must be over 35.

Over 35? That's right. Channel 5 Broadcasting will shortly be searching for the maturer sort of person to re-tune 18 million VCRs, ready for Britain's new terrestrial channel when it goes on air on January 1, 1997.

However, the station's hiring policy is less a blow against ageism — welcome though that will be to those told they are on the scrapheap at 40 — than a precaution against a potential wave of burglaries next summer. Quite simply, Channel 5 is terrified that its offer to tune in every video in Britain will turn into open season for con-men, housebreakers and ne'er-do-wells to prey on the unwary.

"We are naturally concerned to ensure people are protected from crime," one Channel 5 source said.

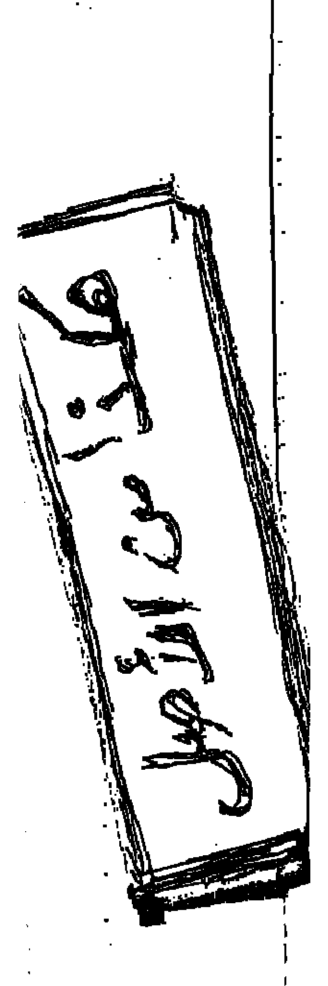
He added that the offer to re-tune every video in the land free was necessary because the new station will broadcast on the channel now used by VCRs.

"It's not difficult to envisage a scenario where a criminal turns up, takes a look at the video, says he needs to fix it in his van, and is then never seen again."

As a result, all Channel 5 video tuners will have a specially designed uniform and identity cards.

According to the Metropolitan Police, the vast majority of crimes are committed by those under the age of 30.

So to show absolutely no chances are being taken, Channel 5 has stipulated that everyone it employs on the re-tuning job must be over 35.



Schools ban beef in wake of BSE fears

Schools have taken beef off the menu despite government calls for calm, write **Sarah Boseley** and **Vivek Chaudhary**

SCHOOLS across the country were last week advised to take beefburgers and other beef products off the menu, dealing a body-blow to the attempts of ministers to calm the escalating crisis over the dangers of mad cow disease.

John Major moved to contain escalating public fears as the Government resisted pressure for an independent inquiry into the possible dangers of eating beef.

He stopped short of saying, during Commons questions, that he thought beef was safe to eat and stressed instead the views of experts.

"There is currently no scientific evidence that BSE [bovine spongiform encephalopathy] can be transmitted to humans or that eating beef causes CJD [Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease] in humans," he said. "That issue is not in question. I am also advised that beef is a safe and wholesome product."

Ann Taylor, shadow leader of the house, called for an urgent Commons debate on the subject in view of the "widely conflicting expert opinion". She added: "This is of great concern to many people throughout the country. It is not as simple as the Prime Minister has said."

Consumer groups urged the Government to launch an independent inquiry. Sue Dibb, co-director of the Food Commission, said: "I think nobody is trusting what is coming out of government any more. The Government seems more interested in propping up the beef industry rather than admitting that there may be a risk, however small it may be.

"I think what is happening is that every time a minister gets up and says beef is safe . . . a whole lot more people stop buying beef because they don't trust the Government."

That, she added, could be worse for the beef industry than an independent inquiry, which might decide that only a very small number of products are risky.

The chairwoman of the Local Authorities Catering Association, Pat Fellows, said that school caterers were disturbed by the controversy, which has been festering since 1990, but was brought to a head once more last week by the declaration of a neuropathologist, Sir Bernard Tomlinson, that he would not eat beefburgers or allow children to do so. He was seconded by another leading nutritionist, Tim Lang of Thames Valley University's Centre for Food Policy.

Laca's 700 members, who comprise virtually all the senior figures in the school meals industry, have been receiving hundreds of calls from worried parents and head teachers. "We are told by Maff [the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food] that beef is safe, but then a former government adviser says he is not eating beef sausages and beefburgers because of his concerns about BSE," said Mrs Fellows.

"Both of these are popular food items with children and this debate has caused concern among parents and a lack of public confidence in the lower cost beef products.

"Burgers, sausages and mince dishes can be made with other meats, and the Laca recommends using turkey mince, chickenburgers and pork sausages until this matter is resolved."

The public would only be reassured when all the experts were in agreement on the safety or risks attached to eating what she called lower-cost beef products. "This is an issue for the whole catering industry and I can't believe that school caterers are the only ones affected. It must be time for those involved on both sides of the argument to give clear information on the way forward," she said.

Maff reiterated the reassurance it has regularly put out over the last few days. "We can only repeat that we consider beef to be safe to eat," said a spokesman.

Those who fear Maff could be wrong are concerned that BSE — first diagnosed in 1986 in cattle that had eaten the brains of sheep infected with scrapie, a similar disease, mixed with their feed — could be transmitted to humans in the form of the rare CJD.

Douglas Hogg, the Agriculture Minister, added his weight to the assurances by the Health Secretary, Stephen Dorrell, in what was intended to be a sustained government counter-offensive.

"I am absolutely certain that British beef is wholly safe," he said on BBC radio. "We do not believe that BSE is transmittable to humans, but against the possibility that we might be wrong about that, we have also put in place various controls within the slaughterhouses that prevent any of the potentially infective agents getting through into the human food chain."

He was backed by the junior health minister, Angela Browning, who accused BBC radio of putting out misleading information on a telephone helpline, suggesting that people should avoid all beef products, including Bovril. The BBC apologised, saying the operator had wrongly used the name for the more generic term stock cubes.

Prof Lang, who has called for an independent inquiry into the feedstuff industry, said the public had lost confidence in the handling of the issue by Maff, which had an unacceptably close relationship with the meat industry.

The chairman of the committee that monitors mad cow disease admitted experiments have not been carried out on primates to see if the disease could be transmitted to humans. John Pattison said that the eight-member Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Committee (Seac) is to be strengthened to increase knowledge of the disease.

Professor Pattison was responding to claims by a brain expert, Dr Helen Grant, who said that researchers should have found out whether primates could develop the BSE virus. If they caught the infection, "it would suggest very strongly that humans might do the same, because we humans are another primate."

Fears of mad cow disease have led to decline in cattle prices as manufacturers said they anticipated a significant drop in demand in the approach to Christmas.

The Meat and Livestock Commission claims sales have already dropped by 5 per cent. Cattle prices dropped by 12 pence per kilo, taking £80 off prices for prime cattle raised for Christmas. The result will almost certainly mean a drop in the price of beef in high street shops.

Chill wind at meat market

"BRITISH Beef. What's it got? It's got the lot" was one of the meat industry's slogans during an advertising campaign to boost sales, *writes Vivek Chaudhary*.

Early one morning last week at Smithfield meat market in the City of London, workers were keen to point out what they say British beef hasn't got.

"It hasn't got mad cow disease," said salesman John Buckley as he loaded boxes of boneless beef into a van for delivery to butchers in east London.

"Sales are very poor at the moment and the industry should be stressing the good points of beef. British housewives have been buying beef for years. I've met some mad women in my time but I don't think that's down to mad cow disease."

As a chilly wind blew across the 800-year-old market, porters known as bummarees hollered "mind your backs" as they weaved their way through customers buying enormous slabs of meat, much of it beef.

"The industry should be booming but things are very bad," said Ron Iddiols, a salesman with Absalom and Tribe Ltd. "Our sales are down by a third. Retailers just don't want to buy too much beef because the customers aren't buying it. I have got loads of stewing beef which I just can't sell."

Retailers buying meat at Smithfield also complained about the lack of interest in beef by customers. Shahid Hussain, who runs a butcher's shop in west London, had just purchased £1,000 worth of lamb and £700 worth of chicken. Normally he spends £1,000 a week on beef but last week he bought just £200 worth.

"The customers just don't want to buy it and the stories over mad cow disease have affected my business quite badly," he said. "The Government should inform people that there's nothing to worry about otherwise a lot of people are going to be out of work."

No clues to BSE mystery

Tim Radford

MAD cow disease — or bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) — has remained a mystery since it appeared eight years ago.

Suspicion fell on the practice of feeding sheep carcasses to cows to boost protein intake. Sheep have always been known to suffer from a spongy brain disease called scrapie.

It still is not clear whether BSE is a new disease. No one knows whether it can spread to humans — or how it spreads at all. The fear is that it is linked with the human version, Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease (CJD). Like BSE, this leaves the brain riddled with holes like a sponge: it destroys memory and motor power, and like BSE there is no treatment. The incidence of CJD is tiny, but it has increased.

Robert Will, a neurologist at the Western general hospital in Edinburgh, is part of the Medical Research Council's CJD surveillance unit. He said that although an unexpectedly high number of farm workers have caught CJD since BSE arrived, even more ministers of religion have fallen victim. He added that if it were spread by diseased tissue — infected brains and spinal cord — abattoir workers would be more at risk than farmers. But there are no abattoir workers or butchers in the CJD statistics since 1987.

In Britain, one person in a million per year is a victim. The same seems to be true throughout Europe, whether or not BSE exists in herds, and even in India, where cows are sacred rather than slaughtered.

The current candidate for spreading infection is a prion: an infectious protein gone maverick. About 10 or 15 per cent of all cases of CJD are probably inherited. Other cases could be explained by rare spontaneous mutations in the gene.

Prions, if they exist, convert normal protein molecules into dangerous ones by inducing them to change their shape. The result: a brain riddled with holes, which has been observed in mink, elk, mice, pigs, antelope, eland, cheetah, puma, ocelot, domestic cat and even ostrich.

Most researchers have begun to accept that the disease can leap from species to species. If BSE can go from one mammal to another, then it can also leap to man.

Sex tourism clampdown 'not tough enough'

Edward Pilkington reports on the critical response to the Home Secretary's proposals to curb the industry

THE Home Secretary, Michael Howard, promised last week to clamp down on the "abhorrent" and "depraved" sex tourism industry, announcing proposals for legislation which were denounced by child care charities as disappointing and inadequate.

His announcement marks the first step towards a sexual tourism offence being put on the statute books. He focused his attack on people who organise tours or encourage others to travel abroad to commit sex offences against children.

At present, paedophiles who engage in sexual activities abroad cannot be penalised in Britain. The authorities are restricted to assisting with information and extraditing suspected offenders to the countries in which they committed the offence.

Mr Howard, who launched a review of the law five months ago, said the full force of the penal system would be used against "the evil people involved in this abhorrent activity. They will face the same tough penalties as they would if they had committed the offences here."

Child care experts criticised the proposals, which they said did not go far enough. The Coalition on Child Prostitution and Tourism, an umbrella of six charities, said Mr Howard's announcement amounted to the "absolute minimum of reform".

"This doesn't begin to address the main problem — individuals travelling overseas to exploit children sexually. Research suggests offences occur more in isolation than as part of a tour," a spokesman said.

The Home Office has consistently argued that any legislation must limit itself to creating new offences that can be shown to have been committed in Britain — specifically conspiracy or incitement to sexually abuse abroad. Under British judicial rules, crimes carried out abroad cannot be tried here as witnesses must be available to give evidence in person.

Mr Howard used that argument in July when he quashed a private member's bill, initiated by Lord Hylton. The Sexual Offences Amendment Bill would have extended the jurisdiction of the courts to try all sexual offences against children — whether conducted individually or in groups — by Britons abroad.

Charities campaigning for tighter regulations point to countries such as Australia, France, Germany and the United States which have all recently passed "extra territoriality" laws allowing the courts to prosecute nationals engaging in sex offences in other countries.

A sex tourism court case has just opened in Australia. It will be closely monitored in Britain because Australia has similar rules of evidence.

Mr Howard now faces the dilemma of finding a legislative route for introducing his proposals as there was no Criminal Justice Bill contained in the Queen's speech last month.

Lord Hylton has reintroduced his bill to the House of Lords. But with the Government determined to focus on organised tours rather than individual exploitation, his attempt looks certain to flounder a second time.

Home Office officials will be keeping an eye on the Philippines this week for developments in a court case that could have important ramifications for the legislation.

Michael Clarke, a British travel agent, aged 48, from Eastbourne, East Sussex, will go on trial in Manila for allegedly promoting child prostitution, an offence that carries a maximum sentence of 40 years in prison. In another case, Michael Douglas, aged 54, from Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire, is awaiting trial, having been picked up near Manila by criminal investigation officers. He has been charged with child sex offences. He was allegedly acting alone and would therefore fall outside the remit of any new legislation.

Nobody knows exactly which form of alleged sex tourism is more prominent — the man acting alone as opposed to the member of an organised group — as there are no figures to compare the categories.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995



Souring the path to peace

A WEEK after President Clinton brought moral uplift to Ireland north and south, the IRA brought everyone down to earth with a bang. The president told the men of violence: "You are the past, your day is over" and most of the nation tingled with excitement. The IRA responded in unreconstructed fashion as if the whiff of reconciliation had passed it by completely. A statement released in Dublin bluntly stated: "There is no question of the IRA meeting the ludicrous demand for a surrender of IRA weapons either through the front or the back door."

It would be easy to dismiss this as a bargaining counter in advance of the first meeting in New York of the three-man independent commission, to be headed by the former US senator George Mitchell. As the British government admitted, the IRA was saying no more than it had said before, even if the language used was intemperate. And they were in any case answering a question (the "surrender" of their weapons) that no one had asked of them. But words do matter. That was what President Clinton's visit was all about. He spoke in the language of hope and sent a tremor of optimism through the land. We all know what the IRA means. They believe themselves to be — no matter what anyone else thinks — a legitimate army: and armies that have agreed to peace talks don't lay down their arms in advance. They haven't in Bosnia, why should they in Ireland, so the argument goes.

But Ireland isn't Bosnia. It isn't like anywhere else on earth. There are three intransigent sides all of the same ethnic grouping but unprepared to compromise because they all know they are 100 per cent in the right and the other sides in the wrong. David Trimble, the Unionist leader, tried to persuade the Protestant paramilitary groups to engage in a token gesture of unilateral disarmament in order to gain "moral advantage" but failed. But that doesn't give the IRA a licence to stall. Have they never heard of moral advantage? Most ordinary people in Britain cannot even begin to understand why, if Nelson Mandela can embrace his jailers, the IRA can't make a simple token gesture: a pound of Semtex on the table as a downpayment of their good intent conditional upon the Protestant terrorist groups doing the same. But they won't and in their own terms they — or at least the current ruling faction within them — think they can't. That's why language is so important. It wasn't just what they said, recidivist though it was, but the way they said it: and especially the use of the world "ludicrous" coming so soon after Northern Ireland had just been bathing in waters of reconciliation.

But it doesn't mean the peace talks have been derailed, merely that they must be pursued in a more sour but maybe realistic way. The IRA is not the only party which must compromise. Martin McGuinness, the Sinn Fein negotiator, was wrong to suggest that Britain was demanding the humiliation and surrender of the IRA, but there is equally no doubt that Mr Major's wafer-thin majority in the House of Commons makes it difficult to manoeuvre without risking the wrath of his Ulster tail. The greatest hope for progress is the undoubted and deep-seated desire of the vast majority of people on both sides of the border for an end — on as honourable terms as is feasible — to a war that has proved to be unwinnable for both sides. Nothing the IRA said last week will change that and it may even strengthen it.

An unhappy 20th anniversary

EAST TIMORESE commemorated two anniversaries last week on successive days. December 7 was the 20th anniversary of the full-scale invasion of their country when Indonesian Marines stormed in. The other anniversary was 24 hours earlier, when President Ford left Jakarta having done nothing to dissuade General Suharto while Henry Kissinger told journalists that the US "fully understands Indonesia's position". No one really believed Jakarta's claim that the Fretilin independence movement was about to impose its "communist clutches". But the Suharto regime had earned its cold-war merit points over the previous decade by physically eliminating hundreds of thousands of real communists — as well as equal numbers who were random victims. The sufferings of a small former colonial people in the remote far east of the Indonesian archipelago were hardly noticed at the time and soon completely forgotten. A few western commentators who did remember were ridiculed — notably Noam Chomsky for daring to suggest that East Timor had become as much a killing field as Cambodia.

So matters might have remained but for a single TV camera at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili five years ago. A new generation of young Timorese, only vaguely aware of the small guerrilla struggle conducted by Fretilin survivors in the hills, had launched their own protest against Indonesian harassment and intimidation. The massacre obliged western countries to make a minimum response. The slaughter in Dili had to be condemned, while accepting Indonesian excuses and without drawing any broader conclusions which might affect future relations with Jakarta.

East Timor is now in a similar predicament to that faced by Tibet. It is not so much an abstract question of sovereignty. It is an issue of elementary human rights that can only be achieved by the withdrawal of outside military forces and granting self-rule to the indigenous population.

For the past two decades Indonesian rigidity has been compounded by the lack of external pressure. Even after Dili, countries such as Britain and Australia have argued against portraying Jakarta as a "bad boy". But selling "dual-use" weapons to Indonesia (Britain), or collaborating in oil exploitation in the Timor Gap (Australia) is to pretend that it is a very good boy. Indonesian assurances on the use of weapons supplied to them are worthless. There should be energetic support for the UN human rights high commissioner, José Ayala Lasso. Nor should Portugal be the only country to offer asylum to East Timorese protesters. East Timor will remain in an oppressive time-warp unless the outside world can convince Indonesia that a 20-year denial of rights is too long.

UK nuclear power: RIP

IT IS, without question, the end of an era. The decision by British Energy to drop plans to build the two remaining nuclear reactors on its books marks the end of nuclear power station construction in Britain for the foreseeable future. Ironically, the death blow for the industry was delivered not by green pressure groups — important though their opposition was — but by City accountants in striped suits. After a cool look at the books they realised that there was no way a privatised nuclear industry could make attractive returns to shareholders lumbered as it is with enormous decommissioning costs and an ongoing need for subsidies from the taxpayer. Instead the rump of the nuclear industry (stripped of its antiquated Magnox stations) will limp towards privatisation under the (euphemistic) ownership of British Energy probably to be sold for £2 to £3 billion, or less than the price of building one of its stations.

As recently as 20 years ago Britain had more installed nuclear capacity than any other country. The Government decided to go it alone by building its own homespun advanced gas-cooled reactors instead of American pressurised water reactors (PWRs) and then when the UK finally decided to harmonise on the world standard — the PWRs — the bottom fell out of nuclear power world-wide. What killed the industry was a combination of factors, including safety, huge decommissioning costs and an inability to compete competitively with other fuels — despite numerous fibs put out by the industry.

British Energy blamed low gas prices for part of its decision, but since it takes seven years to build a new station it is difficult to believe they can be so sure about the future so far ahead. If this were any other industry the City's reluctance to put up money for long-term capital projects would be dismissed as yet another case of short-termism. On this occasion the accountants are right. There may still be a future for the nuclear industry but only when it is able to deliver energy in an environmentally clean, safe and economic way. At the moment it fails on two out of three of these criteria. Until then it should continue its research into areas like fusion and, as Friends of the Earth state, use Britain's skills in reprocessing and storage technology to clean up the accumulated legacy of radioactive waste in Britain and abroad.

Dirty tricks in the race-card game

Hugo Young

THE race card usually lands face down on the table. Its potency is surreptitious, and its playing, by otherwise respectable politicians, is always deniable. It is the joker that nobody at the despatch box would dream of admitting he or she possessed. But a party in desperate political trouble has persuaded itself that this card, though more like the deuce than the ace of spades, offers one of the few trumps with which it can be sure of taking a trick.

The Asylum and Immigration Bill, which began passage through the Commons this week, is not, of course, an overtly racist measure. The back of the card is clean enough. The Bill's severities, which are without precedent in Britain, will apply to Bosnian and Nigerian alike in flight from oppression. It will abolish legal rights, destroy the relevance of appeal and, in an accompanying trick, withdraw social benefits so as to make it impossible for thousands of people to keep body and soul together long enough to exercise their rights anyway. But it is true that the victim of this could as easily be a Latvian as a Sudanese.

The race card, however, isn't confined by such subtle distinctions. It is blind to suits. What it addresses is the fear of influx, which in British psychology is co-terminous with the immigration and/or asylum of non-whites. What it plays to is the evidence of private polling, done by both main parties, which shows that this issue, almost alone on the political agenda, is one where the Tories score better than Labour.

We are at the beginning of an 18-month election campaign. Put crudely but not inaccurately, Labour is seen as being favourable to the advance and prospering of non-whites, and more people than not are ready to tell pollsters they don't like it. Here, as some Conservatives believe, lies a chance to limit the electoral disaster. Many Tories, not least their leader, will be appalled to be labelled with such a strategy. Play the race card? What a nauseating insult to a Brixton boy. The party's innocence, however, depends on a belief in its good faith. Is its policy, in general and in particular, rooted in impulses that are manifestly decent — or indecent? The evidence is not encouraging.

The Asylum Bill does not fill a long-neglected need. Everyone knows there is immigration fraud, and not all asylum applications are justified. For a long time, the processing machinery has been getting clogged. But barely three years ago the Asylum and Immigration Appeals Act 1993 already both streamlined and restricted asylum appeals, especially for anybody arriving from homeland persecution through another country on the way. Designed to deter applicants, speed judgment, and curtail grounds for appeal, the Act was draconian — but not enough.

The new bill moves with indecent haste to slam the door still tighter. These "fast-track" appeals, to be exercised within 10 days of a refused entry or not at all, will now be applied to almost all categories of asylum. Anyone coming from a so-called "white list" of countries will face an insurmountable presumption that they do not qualify as persecuted individuals worthy of asylum: and white-list membership is at the supple discretion of the Home Office, which was once ready to designate both Nigeria and Algeria as safe. In virtually every case the power of the Home Office, to control supposedly independent adjudications by placing applicants within a category that pre-loads the case against them, will be increased.

The nooks and crannies of this pernicious bill, which will produce a great deal of misery with only minimal elimination of fraud, will be examined by Parliament. An idea of the attitudes that inform it, however, is already available from the performance of the new immigration minister, Ann Widdecombe, over two Nigerian asylum-seekers currently on the brink of deportation. The religious pieties that Ms Widdecombe took indelicately to flaunting earlier in the year seem to have left her political brutality, not to mention her Orwellian approach to moral philosophy, untouched.

Abiodun Igbindu and Ade Onibiyo are young Nigerians, both connected with the pro-democracy movement in their home country, who were about to be deported but who have now been granted, under intense political pressure, a few days' grace so as to exercise a final right of appeal. Ms Widdecombe's language in defending her insistence that they return may come from nothing more obnoxious than the school of political double-talk. She says that any applicant, even a democrat from Nigeria, must be able to prove he "would be in individual danger". But her mind-set, along with that of the minister, Mr Howard, comes from the gutter, where any concept of moral decency is swilled down the drain of political opportunism.

NIGERIA is a country affording no reliable promise of life, let alone freedom, to opponents of its ruling junta. Having recently hanged nine such, without benefit of fair trial, it has done more than most to demonstrate this beyond the most casuistical pretence. Mr Onibyo's father, recently deported from Britain, hasn't been seen since. Yet Ms Widdecombe, insisting that each case must prove individual danger, refuses to admit even the most blatant general evidence in support of it. Only, it seems, when a Nigerian asylum-seeker turns up as a corpse at the gate of the British high commission in Lagos might she and Mr Howard be satisfied that he was, after all, entitled to stay here.

This posture is so repellent, such a betrayal of the British tradition for supplying refuge against persecution, that it's hard to believe it will play well with many voters. However, as a reminder of the dark instincts some Tories, are willing to satisfy, it constitutes the race card. It presents Labour and Liberal Democrats with a problem. For the more they denounce the Tories, the more inexorably they help the card do its infamous work. But opposition must continue, on principle and in practice. For the only way to destroy the race card is to show, without the smallest ambiguity, that it cannot win.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995

Keating has a lesson for New Labour

Tony Blair is heading to Australia for Christmas. **Martin Kettle** on what the British Opposition leader can learn from his Labor counterpart

PHOTOMONTAGE: LIZ COULDWELL/ROGER TOOTH

AUSTRALIA'S prime minister is tickled pink that British politicians and journalists are making the trip across the world to discover the secrets of his success. Or maybe he's just pleased to see me. But Paul Keating's gift for the one-liner makes the long journey worthwhile when I am introduced to him in his Canberra offices. "The last time any journos thought it was worth coming out here from London was after that time I tweaked the royal bra-strap," he says with a grin. [Keating subsequently denied using the phrase.]

Keating shouldn't be too surprised that things have changed. The Man Who Put His Arm Round The Queen has a much more substantial reputation in Britain these days. For the British Labour Party in particular, he has become The Man From Whom They Can Learn. And for one very simple reason.

The British Labour party has lost four general elections in a row since 1979. The Australian Labor party, by contrast, has won five on the trot since 1983. That is why Tony Blair has a regular hotline to Australia and why John Prescott recently visited Canberra to see how it is done.

Three years ago, when British Labour politicians looked abroad for inspiration it was to America. In 1992 Bill Clinton was the model and Labour's high-flyers, including Blair, flew west for enlightenment on how to beat the right. But Clinton's best lessons were all about campaigning. His record behind the presidential desk did not match up. As Labour became more confident that it could beat the Tories the focus has moved on. How do you govern well? How do you retain support to win the second general election? And then the third? Cue Model Australia.

You only need to be in Australia for a short time to grasp the vital difference between the two Labours — incumbency. Australian Labor's ascendancy — under Bob Hawke from 1983 and then under Paul Keating from 1991 — is based on the remorseless seriousness with which the party pursues its governing project. It takes a line, it sticks to it, it defends it and it drives it through. As the country's leading political writer Paul Kelly, editor-in-chief of Rupert Murdoch's the Australian, puts it: "The hallmark of Hawke's and Keating's party is a governing mentality. It never had one before."

Government is as distant from Opposition as Britain is from Australia. Being in office may bring all kinds of problems but they are problems that British Labour would kill for. Hawke and Keating offer Blair many lessons, and Blair — with his Australian connections dating back to childhood and to Oxford — has been an eager student. Prescott is only the latest of a series of senior Labour politicians who have crossed the world for a crash course in Labour government. Others will soon follow. For New Labour, Australia is the one to follow.

What is the secret of Australian Labor's apparent success? According to Paul Kelly it is that they broke with the old pattern of Labor government familiar from Britain but associated in Australia with the 1972 Gough Whitlam administration. "The sequence used to run: win an election; take office with an ambitious reformist flurry; hit economic problems; change course; face an electoral backlash; lose the next election. Hawke and Keating were quite ruthless about changing that. Their mentality was against doing everything quickly. It was about playing a long game. The main lesson for Blair should be to be just as ruthless."

When Hawke and Keating won in 1983 they came in as the party of superior economic management and dedicated to sustained growth. But Labor was — and is — also the party of social justice. The story of the past 12 years has been the attempt to balance those two sometimes conflicting imperatives. Blair is only too well aware that the Australians have succeeded as well as anyone.

Peter Botsman of the Sydney-based Evatt Foundation — the Australian equivalent of the British Institute of Public Policy Research — says that it is definitely a success story. "Paul Keating is on another level from Bill Clinton. The successes in office have been absolutely mammoth. Labor has renegotiated the whole relationship of the Australian economy with the outside world — in the past we were one of the most highly protectionist economies in the world — and at the same time protected our people. That's a huge achievement."

Australian Labor's economic policies since 1983 have been variously described as "Thatcherism by another name" (by John Pilger), "assertively pragmatic, anti-utopian and non-socialist" (by a Fabian Society pamphlet) and "a decade of creative destruction" (by Paul Kelly). Yet it has never been the unrestrained marketisation which was undertaken by, for instance, the New Zealand Labour governments of the 1980s. Australia's economic liberalism agenda has always been matched by an explicit agenda of social justice. That does not mean that some people have not got hurt in the shake-up. But it certainly is a crucial reason why Australian Labor is still in government while New Zealand Labour is not (a recent poll there put the NZLP on 16 per cent and its party leader's popularity rating at 3 per cent).

"HOW DO you compete in a global economy and maintain a proper level of equity for your people?" asks Peter Botsman. "That's the question which is at the heart of Australian Labor's time in government."

Australian Labor has spent 12 years combining tough deregulatory economics with targeted tenderness in social policy — precisely the prescription that Blair favours. Labor has deregulated the banks and the airlines and has cut top rates of tax. It has achieved a substantially lower government expenditure to GDP ratio than Britain — 36.9 per cent compared with the UK's 41.6 according to OECD projections for 1995. But the poor have benefited from substantial increases in the social wage, jobs programmes, family assistance, new superannuation schemes, student loans and a Medicare health insurance network. Workplace rights have been kept in place, not destroyed, so that a minimum wage, equal pay for women, parental leave, and protection against unfair dismissal all remain part of the deal.

Some of the statistics are remarkable. Hourly labour productivity has gone up by 24 per cent under Labor. Days lost due to industrial disputes have fallen from 872 per 1,000 workers in 1983 to 84 per 1,000 in 1995, a record. But whereas similar achievements in Britain have been accompanied by the Thatcherite policies of unpicking the social wage and the welfare settlement, in Australia both have been boosted. The most telling statistic of the Labor years is that while real incomes have increased by 21 per cent over the past 12 years, real earnings have increased by only 7 per cent. In other words, two-thirds of the increase has been concentrated in a social wage which has been targeted at the poor rather than at the population as a whole.

This is the most alluring of all Australian Labor's lessons for British Labour. It is undoubtedly the direction in which Blair and his new social security spokesman Chris Smith, another British politician familiar with Australia, would like to move. No prize would be greater for Blair than to emulate these achievements. But there is a massive political catch.

That catch is that Australian Labor's success has been achieved with the active involvement of the trade unions. Labor's ability to carry through economic restructuring rests on a series of formal accords with the Australian Council of Trade Unions, negotiated and delivered by the formidable Bill Kelty, the ACTU general secretary and longtime Keating ally. The unions supply pay restraint while in return the government delivers the social wage. The latest accord, the eighth, is titled "Sustaining Growth, Low Inflation and Fairness". It sets goals of continued low inflation of 2-3 per cent, the creation of 600,000 additional jobs by 1999 and a 5 per cent unemployment target by 2001, in return for further decentralisation of pay bargaining. The whole thing is an explicit network of trade-offs. Labor offers nothing for nothing. And why should it?

Everyone you meet in Australian policy making makes the same point. No accord, no growth. The secret, says Peter Botsman, is its flexibility. "They've got something we want. We have a lot that they want. It's all on the table," says a Keating adviser. "I think we would have collapsed like they did in New Zealand if it had not been for the accord," concludes Geoff Gallop, Western Australian Labor MP and one of Blair's oldest friends. And Keating himself told me "You can run a country without an accord, but you can't run it fast and you can't run it straight."

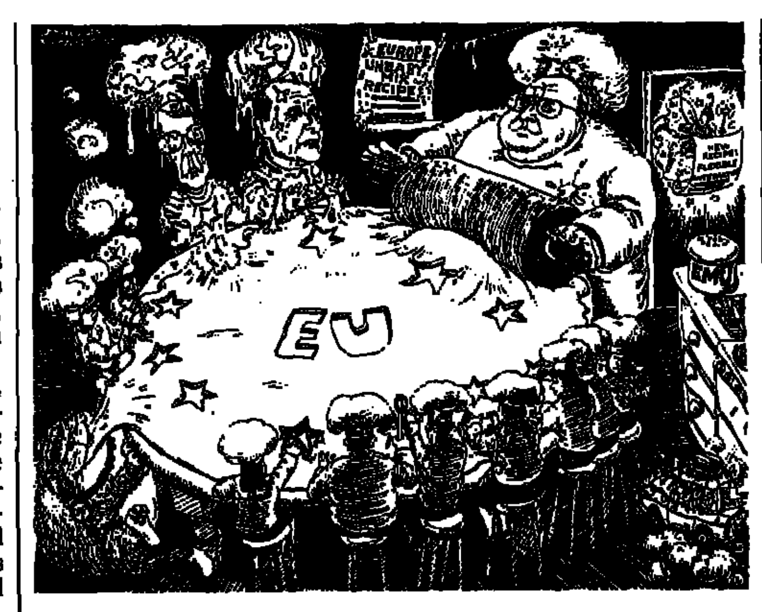
YET BLAIR almost certainly believes he has no such option in Britain and in any case is temperamentally suspicious of the idea. He likes the Keating vision, but he does not believe that the role of the unions could be transposed to Britain. Memories of the 1970s Social Contract are too strong and too negative. And in any case, could British unions, with their generally narrow wages-and-conditions agenda, rise to the broader challenge? It is easy to see TUC general secretary John Monks playing Bill Kelty to Blair's Keating. But could Monks deliver the way Kelty can? Nevertheless the fact remains: without industrial peace and wage restraint it is hard to see British Labour governing for the length of time that it aims for.

Perhaps the biggest irony, though, is this. Australian Labor may be a model for British Labour. Yet the party whose political fortunes it most resembles are the British Conservatives. After five election wins, Keating's government is in trouble with the voters the way the Conservatives are in Britain. There must be an election by May 1996, but the latest polls show Labor slipping to a 10-point deficit behind John Howard's rightwing opposition coalition. Party loyalists don't rule out another Keating recovery like 1992. That was the one in which, thanks to the ALP's remarkably effective marginal seat targeting policy (on which Prescott received a valuable briefing), Labor turned round an election which everyone expected them to lose. But 1996 is not looking like a Labor year in Australia. Some well-placed politicians say they could lose as many as 40 seats.

No one in a democratic system can govern for ever. Australian Labor has had a remarkable run, just like the British Conservatives. Now in both countries it may simply be time for a change — particularly a change from the economic insecurity associated with both these long-running governments. But if Tony Blair wins the next general election the change will continue — and large parts of his guidebook to government will have been written by the man who once tweaked the royal bra-strap.

Why Europe needs flexible friends

With European leaders facing deep divisions as they meet in Madrid this week, **Will Hutton** suggests a way forward



EUROPE is the just cause. The more the nation state is deified and the more Asia is held up as an economic exemplar, the more attractive the European project becomes.

Democracy, international order, social cohesion — European peoples are much more likely to have their options extended under the umbrella of pan-European institutions than in facing down the multinationals and the global financial markets alone. The analogy extends to defence and fighting drug-related crime. Modern Europe needs supranational governance; to be for Europe is surely, in historic terms, to be right.

But what should this Europe be? The European Union after Maastricht finds itself confronting the most severe pressures. Whether it is monetary union or enlargement, the member states of the EU are being tested for the true compatibility of their economies and political cultures — which the cold war submerged. The strains in France tell one part of the story; the tensions at this week's European summit in Madrid, over integration, another. Europe need answers, and it needs them quickly.

Start with enlargement. Nobody with any sense of history could contest the desire of the east Europeans to join the EU, but sentiment is no guide to good policy. Just to admit Poland, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia into the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) as it stands would cost an additional $47 billion a year, estimates one study — and the sums rise exponentially the more new members join. Moreover, to add more members to gridlocked decision-making processes will precipitate political paralysis.

The solution is to restructure the CAP and reorganise the EU's decision-making procedures; without this, enlargement is a threat. The obstructive British position of advocating enlargement while resisting any change in the decision-making structures is a barely concealed strategy to achieve just that — and it should be recognised as such. The Union's friends serve it poorly by not being explicit about the challenge enlargement implies.

The jobs of the Commission, the parliament and the Council of Ministers need codifying and democratising, accepting that Europe has to develop a political culture to underpin the legitimacy of pan-EU institutions. It is a task as huge as it is subtle.

Enter European Monetary Union (EMU). The federalists around Chancellor Kohl in Bonn correctly see this as an irresistible means of propelling political integration. Monetary union acceptable to Germany means the imposition of rigorous budgetary discipline, and that requires much more direction and coordination from the centre. This empowerment of European institutions will oblige them to become more efficient, beginning the reform and democratisation that all agree is necessary.

It is a sign of Europe's lack of a common political culture that the obvious logic of this syllogism is contested in Britain. First the Chancellor, Ken Clarke, and now a paper by the left of centre Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), try to persuade us that a single currency is not irretrievably bound up with closer political union.

In Restating The Case For EMU, Dan Corry, the IPPR's senior economist, asserts that Europe's states can continue as autonomous political unities under a single currency. This is a delusion.

Where Corry scores is in the important reminder that a single currency would secure the Europeanisation of the Bundesbank. Moreover he says that, from the perspective of the left, social democracy is more sustainable under the protection of a single monetary regime than with floating exchange rates. In this he is less deluded.

But Corry neglects the political economics of the operation. Germany is not going to give up the mark for anything less hard, so Europe will be able to Europeanise monetary policy only to the extent it shadows German policy — a proper discipline from Germany's point of view, but defeating the object of other members. Not only will there be no central mechanism for redistributing resources, but members will have less budgetary autonomy, even as they conform to convergence terms. This would be a recipe for dislocation, even if Corry were proved right about long-term gains.

BUT THE core issue remains. A European Central Bank allied to German policy will find the political legitimacy vital to its functioning hard to acquire — even if it is supported by member states. Europe needs a better impetus than a strategy so pregnant with risk. But what and how?

There has to be a common cause, functioning supranational and democratic institutions, and time and flexibility. Using these three principles, nine economists from across Europe have recently produced a highly original response — Flexible Integration (the Centre for Economic Policy Research) — that should be read by every delegate at this week's Madrid summit.

The nine start from the area already established as a common policy base, the single market. But beyond this base there is disagreement over pace, direction and even desirability of integration. How to reconcile this and move the project on?

The solution is elegant. The common base should be governed supranationally. In other words, all matters relating to the single market should be run by institutions establishing law as if Europe were federally constructed. This is an extension and codification, in a sense, of where we already are.

But outside the common base, EU members would collaborate in "open partnerships", initiatives designed by groups of states that would be open to all to join — again a recognition of where we are. A partnership on environmental rules for the Baltic need not include every member, just as monetary union or defence efforts would be open partnerships.

The nine accept that without a common monetary regime, the single market might be wrecked by competitive devaluation. The solution is simple. Inflation targets should be established across the Union so that single market members would accept a monetary discipline, but be allowed more freedom of scope than if wedded to a single currency. This would be an open partnership.

Federalists could be assuaged by establishing a part of the EU governed in a quasi-federal fashion — and monetary union could be furthered without the Germanification of fiscal and monetary policy in the process. All sceptics are required to do is to accept the current position by ratifying the common base — they can then stay aloof from open partnerships if they choose.

Europe can establish a monetary regime — but looser than EMU — and there is a robust mechanism for organising cross-border alliances where there are advantages from so doing. For example, the WEU, Europe's defence arm, could become an open partnership, excluding the four pacifist member states, thus allowing Europe the chance of an effective defence policy without slowing to the pace of the most pacifist member.

Europe has been built by taking risks, but they have always been well judged. We are at a dangerous crossroads, and the recoil from a failed single currency could be profoundly destabilising. Flexible integration lets Europe off the hook and makes the risks manageable. The uphill task is to persuade the Commission and the German chancellory of its merits.

In Brief

THE GOVERNMENT's drive to widen share ownership was given a boost when official figures showed more than a fifth of ordinary shares are held by individual owners — the biggest proportion for 40 years. Individuals had a £154 billion stake in listed companies last year, according to the Central Statistical Office.

THE PRESIDENT of Fiat, Gianni Agnelli, aged 74, put an end to months of speculation about the future of Italy's largest private company by announcing that he would step down "in the coming months".

TURIN magistrates have asked for Cesare Romiti, chief executive and managing director of Fiat, to be sent for trial on charges of issuing false company information, tax fraud and bribing political parties.

COCA-COLA became only the fourth American corporation to surpass a stock market valuation of $100 billion. Shares in the company surged by more than half this year as investors decided its multi-billion dollar investments in developing markets such as China, India and eastern Europe would pay off sooner than expected.

GRANADA has asked the Takeover Panel to intervene if Forte tries to sell any trophy hotels cheaply to escape from its £3.4 billion hostile bid.

TOP executives in Britain's 250 largest companies made a notional profit of more than £54 million on their share options in 1994 and 1995.

VIRGIN Atlantic Airways plans to buy or lease £3 billion of new aircraft by 1998 in a bid to become the world's fourth-largest long-haul carrier.

JAPAN'S ministry of finance has announced the steepest monthly fall for five years in trade and current account surpluses, boosting hopes that international frictions may be easing.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates December 4	Sterling rates December 11
Australia	2.0765-2.0808	2.0808-2.0851
Austria	15.53-15.55	15.57-15.59
Belgium	45.36-45.46	45.50-45.60
Canada	2.0967-2.0997	2.1154-2.1184
Denmark	8.55-8.57	8.57-8.59
France	7.67-7.68	7.64-7.65
Germany	2.2081-2.2112	2.2142-2.2172
Hong Kong	11.88-11.89	11.86-11.87
Ireland	0.9658-0.9681	0.9668-0.9694
Italy	2,459-2,463	2,445-2,449
Japan	155.01-155.28	154.89-155.15
Netherlands	2.4717-2.4747	2.4779-2.4812
New Zealand	2.3639-2.3677	2.3708-2.3749
Norway	9.73-9.75	9.77-9.79
Portugal	231.82-232.45	232.60-233.13
Spain	188.65-188.95	188.60-188.88
Sweden	10.10-10.12	10.34-10.36
Switzerland	1.7935-1.7963	1.7921-1.7949
USA	1.5358-1.5368	1.5338-1.5348
ECU	1.1984-1.2000	1.2045-1.2058

FTSE 100 Share Index down 17.9 at [illegible]. FTSE [illegible] Index down [illegible]. Gold up $4.00 at [illegible].

Stock Exchange risks systems crash

Patrick Donovan

FEARS are mounting that the introduction of hundreds of millions of pounds' worth of new computer networks by the Stock Exchange and the Bank of England could prompt London's trading system to crash.

Brokers are telling the City that so much new computer technology will come on stream at the same time next August, it could "short-circuit" London dealing systems.

The Stock Exchange, which suffered humiliation after it was forced to scrap its Taurus share settlement system two years ago, considers that its credibility depends on the success of its new "Sequence VI" computerised share market. But the Bank of England invests just as much importance in its Crest electronic system for settling share transactions. Neither body is prepared to compromise on its planned start-ups.

Broking firms are already facing a heavy workload even without the new changes. Systems introduced nearly a decade ago in preparation for Big Bang need updating and several firms are having to re-engineer their computers to take account of rapid changes in the marketplace such as the increasing use of derivatives.

On top of that, the recent spate of acquisitions mean several broking firms are having to integrate the rival systems they have bought.

Crest goes live in July with the first settlement transactions taking place on August 19 — just a week before the Stock Exchange starts up its own system. This means that City users will have to develop separate links in parallel and test each system simultaneously.

Computer Weekly said there are signs that many users are ignoring the changes, either because they cannot cope — a form of information technology overload — or because "they do not realise the scale of the changes that will be required".

It added that some firms have had difficulties in finding the staff, management time and budgets to enable them to prepare fully for the changes.

Stock Exchange chief executive Michael Lawrence said earlier this month that Sequence VI represented the biggest shake-up to the London market since "Big Bang" nearly 10 years ago. It will make the City the world's only share market to allow both quote- and order-driven equity dealing.

London has traditionally favoured the quote system, whereby traders buy and sell shares based on prices posted on electronic screens. The reform will make the City more compatible with its European counterparts, which deal on the order-driven system, involving the posting of share bargains on electronic bulletin boards.



The Washington Post

Croats Raze Towns Ahead of Handover

John Pomfret in Sipovo

SCORES of Bosnian Croat soldiers turned this town into a festival of fire and theft at the weekend, looting dozens of houses and then setting them ablaze in defiance of the U.S.-brokered international peace plan for Bosnia.

Huge plumes of smoke and tongues of orange flame poured out of at least 10 buildings in the center of this west Bosnian town that will soon be handed over to Serb control. Croat gunmen, weighed down with television sets and furniture, stumbled from house to house, packing tractor-trailers full of loot.

"This is good. This is really good," one Croat fighter said with a smirk as his comrades struggled to load what appeared to be a king-size water bed from a house into the back of a Croat militia truck. He dumped about four gallons of fuel inside the house and put a match to it. "Next step, the gasoline," he howled as the fuel ignited and rapidly turned the wood-frame structure into a roiling inferno.

The Croats are destroying Sikovo and the neighboring town of Mrkonjic Grad because both are slated to shift from Croat control to Bosnian Serb hands under the peace deal worked out in Dayton, Ohio, last month. The Bosnian Serbs are supposed to surrender five suburbs around Sarajevo to the mostly Muslim Bosnian government.

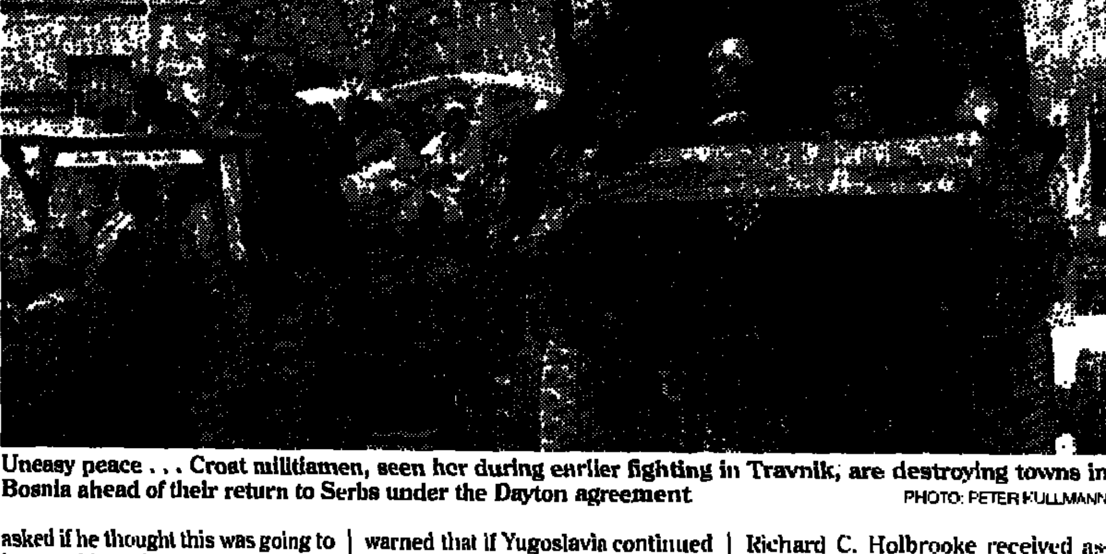
The United Nations and Western countries have called the Croats' burning of homes a violation of the Dayton agreement, saying it sets an ominous precedent that could foreshadow the similar destruction of much of Sarajevo by Serbs. But British U.N. troops in Sipovo and Mrkonjic Grad have done nothing to stem the mayhem, arguing that their U.N. peacekeeping mandate — established before the Dayton accord paved the way for NATO intervention in Bosnia under looser rules of engagement — precludes such action.

"Who cares about Dayton?" said Ante Markic, a 28-year-old soldier from the town of Livno, down the road. "We've gotten orders to burn Sipovo, so we're going to burn Sipovo."

British Army Capt. Colin Armstrong-Bell said the Croats have burned the better part of six towns in the area. During a trip into the area last week, he recalled seeing one group of soldiers looting houses, another group placing logs against the outside walls of the houses "as if to create a bonfire" and a third group setting them ablaze.

This and other violations of the Dayton accord by all three Bosnian factions illustrate the complexities of bringing peace to the country after 3½ years of war. They also underscore the need, U.N. and Western officers say, for a rapid change in the way business is conducted in Bosnia if NATO's deployment of 60,000 troops is going to have any hope of achieving peace.

"If we stand by and watch these guys do the things, the way the U.N. did, then there's no way peace will come," said one U.S. officer in this region. "All of these factions could use a swift kick in the rear." But asked if he thought this was going to happen, his reply was curt: "Nope."



Uneasy peace . . . Croat militiamen, seen her during earlier fighting in Travnik, are destroying towns in Bosnia ahead of their return to Serbs under the Dayton agreement PHOTO: PETER KULLMANN

U.N. and Western diplomats say that since the Dayton deal was initialed, the following problems have surfaced:

Last week, Croats in the south Bosnian city of Mostar released from jail Ivica Rajic, a Croat militiaman who was indicted by the International War Crimes Tribunal in The Hague on charges of leading Croat forces that massacred Muslims in the village of Stupni Do in October 1993. Under the terms of the Dayton deal, all three sides pledged to cooperate with the tribunal.

Serbian-led Yugoslavia is violating the terms of the Dayton agreement by refusing to cooperate with the war crimes tribunal. South African Justice Richard Goldstone, the chief prosecutor at The Hague, warned that if Yugoslavia continued to rebuff his work, the tribunal would inform the U.N. Security Council of the matter, which could trigger a reimposition of economic sanctions against Belgrade.

The Bosnian Serbs have violated the Dayton agreement twice recently. In northern Bosnia, Serbs expelled about 60 Muslim families from their homes although the Dayton peace agreement was supposed to halt the practice of forced expulsions that has come to be known as "ethnic cleansing." The Serbs also resumed blocking U.N.-escorted convoys to the eastern enclave of Gorazde in violation of commitments they made under the Dayton accord to allow free access for humanitarian convoys.

Christine Spolar in Sarajevo writes: Assistant Secretary of State Richard C. Holbrooke received assurances from the Bosnian government at the weekend that it will remove foreign Islamic fighters from its territory and ensure the safety of Serbs in Bosnia.

U.S. military and political authorities have raised concerns about non-Bosnian Muslim fighters, called mujaheddin, who have fought alongside Bosnian army soldiers and continue to train in camps north of Sarajevo. Those fearful of the foreign guerrillas have raised the possibility of guerrilla attacks against American or other NATO troops sent here to enforce the Dayton peace accords.

U.N. officials in central Bosnia estimate that as many as 1,500 soldiers from such countries as Iran, Libya, Algeria and Afghanistan live in 10 camps around the region.

Western Sahara's Long Stalemate

GW. Dec.17,95

Thomas W. Lippman

OF ALL the foreign political leaders who pass through Washington on diplomatic business, few leave as frustrated as Mohammed Abdulaziz.

He is head of the Polisario Front, an all-but-forgotten independence group fighting one of the last forlorn struggles of post-colonial Africa. Hardly anybody in the State Department, the White House or the diplomatic corps wanted to hear his alarmist message.

That was because the message has not changed for several years, everyone understands the Polisario's plight and nobody is inclined to do much about it, Arab diplomats and U.S. officials said.

They said it is probably true, as Abdulaziz charged, that the United Nations Security Council is preparing to ratify Morocco's takeover of his country, the Western Sahara. And Abdulaziz may even be right in saying that such an outcome could destabilize much of North Africa because his group would return to guerrilla war and perhaps resort to urban terrorism inside Morocco.

But U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has told the Security Council that it is time to break a four-year stalemate and go ahead with a referendum to decide the future of Western Sahara: independence or union with Morocco. The Security Council is to vote, perhaps as early as this week, on a formula proposed by Boutros-Ghali to determine who is eligible to vote, which Abdulaziz and some independent analysts say would stack the referendum in favor of Morocco by giving the vote to non-Saharans sent there by King Hassan II for that purpose.

U.S. officials said they see little choice but to approve the secretary general's formula because no one is willing to go on paying for a U.N. mission in Western Sahara, known as MINURSO, that has dragged on for years without resolving the referendum issue. But Abdulaziz and his supporters said Boutros-Ghali's plan would reward Morocco for its military occupation of the disputed territory and its intransigence in the negotiations.

"The United States and the United Nations can't let themselves be dragged into this dirty affair by the king of a corrupt country," Abdulaziz said in an interview. "What does the United States want?" he asked. "Stability in the region and stability in Morocco. To impose a Moroccan solution [on the people of Western Sahara] undermines these objectives. Why can't the United States see this?"

In a recent report to the Security Council, Boutros-Ghali acknowledged that the proposed voter eligibility formula is unacceptable to the Polisario.

But the secretary general said he has "concluded that the new approach is the only way the process can be carried forward" because of Morocco's objections to all previous formulas. The alternative, he said, might be to forget the referendum and end the U.N. mission in Western Sahara, though that outcome also could lead to a resumption of Polisario's war for independence.

"From our point of view," a State Department official said, the U.N.-sponsored referendum process "has value. There have been no casualties since it went into effect. It created its own stability and defused tension between Morocco and Algeria," which has supported Polisario.

The struggle over the sparsely settled Western Sahara territory has been going on for 20 years, since Spain pulled out of its former colony. The International Court of Justice at The Hague ruled that no country had a clear right of sovereignty.

In November 1975, Morocco's king led more than 300,000 of his subjects into Western Sahara, followed by Moroccan troops, to assert his claim to sovereignty. The Polisario, backed by Algeria and Libya, began a war for independence that lasted until a U.N.-brokered cease-fire in 1991.

Mexico Bedeviled by Graft

EDITORIAL

QUESTION: What do South Korea, Italy and Mexico have in common? Answer: All three are countries moving from authoritarian or one-party regimes to open democracy. In each of the three, the previous regime ran on pervasive corruption that can't stand the kind of scrutiny it's getting under the new system. All three are countries that have become a lot richer over the past generation, and the amounts of money in the corruption cases are startlingly large. But there are also important differences among the three, and among them Mexico is the country to worry about.

South Korea's elected government is pursuing the cleanup with muscle and great self-confidence, jailing two former presidents of the country who represent the earlier era. The demise of Italy's once-dominant Christian Democratic Party a couple of years ago has led to much turmoil, but the basic stability of the country is hardly in doubt. It's reinforced by the strong framework of the European Union.

The United States has tried to extend a similar framework to Mexico with the North American Free Trade Agreement, but it's too recent to have the EU's solidity.

Carlos Salinas de Gortari, who was president of Mexico until a year ago and is now living abroad almost as a fugitive, faxed a long and vehement letter last week to several news organizations. The denigration that he has suffered over the past year, he wrote, is being led by a cabal of old-guard politicians, including another former president, Luis Echeverria, who bitterly oppose Mr. Salinas's economic reforms and his attempts to move Mexico away from its tradition of top-down politics. Some of those politicians, Mr. Salinas further charged, have ties to the drug dealers. None of that, certainly, is proved.

In Italy and South Korea, the old regimes are gone forever, and those countries have moved decisively to a new stage of their political lives. But in Mexico the antidemocratic forces are still very much alive and fighting with great energy to regain their perquisites. Mexican democracy will probably win in the end, but it's far from a sure thing. This tremendous quarrel, as Mr. Salinas says, underlies everything else in Mexico's politics.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995

Dos Santos Visits the White House

Thomas W. Lippman

ANGOLAN President Jose Eduardo dos Santos, an arch-villain from the Cold War whom the United States and white-ruled South Africa spent nearly two decades trying to get rid of, was received cordially at the White House last week and promised President Clinton he would take new steps to shore up his country's fragile peace.

Dos Santos pledged to terminate his government's contract with a South Africa-based mercenary force known as Executive Outcomes, rein in his riot police and pull government troops out of areas they seized recently in clashes with forces loyal to Dos Santos's longtime rival, Jonas Savimbi.

Dos Santos told reporters after his meeting with Clinton that his government would "do our best for this [peace] process to become irreversible."

"We are convinced that with assistance from the United States of America and from the international community in general, peace will be consolidated and a new page will be opened in Angola," dos Santos said.

On one level, the mere fact of being received here on an official visit, his first in 16 years as president of his resource-rich but war-ravaged country, was a triumph for Dos Santos. Not so long ago it would have been inconceivable for him to stay at Blair House and have lunch with a U.S. president.

Throughout the final decade of the Cold War his Marxist-oriented MPLA party, backed by 50,000 Cuban troops, was regarded in Washington as the red menace incarnate, threatening U.S. interests all across Southern Africa.

Washington and Pretoria backed Savimbi, whose National Union for the Total Independence of Angola, or UNITA, battled Dos Santos's group for control of Angola from independence in 1975 until the two exhausted sides agreed to a cease-fire just over a year ago. Savimbi having outlived his usefulness as a U.S. proxy, Clinton recognized Dos Santos shortly after becoming president in 1973.

"The President was very encouraged by the tone, very encouraged by the status of U.S.-Angolan relations and the prospect for U.S.-Angolan relations as a result of this very important visit," White House spokesman Mike McCurry said.

"We are at a critical juncture in Angola," a senior official said. The cease-fire has generally held up, he said, but progress has been very slow on implementing military and political provisions the 1994 agreement, such as integrating UNITA troops into the national army.

At a meeting with Washington Post editors and reporters, Dos Santos insisted his government is committed to carrying out the cease-fire agreement, cooperating with the approximately 6,000 United Nations peacekeeping troops in the country and giving Savimbi a role in a government of national reconciliation.

The United States is a major importer of Angolan oil. Dos Santos said he is seeking U.S. government assistance to encourage investment in other economic areas as well.



Angola's President Dos Santos lets go a dove for peace during campaigning in the 1992 UN-supervised polls, which he won. The opposition UNITA refused to recognise the result and went back to war

Race Crime Shocks U.S. Army Town

William Benjamin and Dana Priest

PVT. James Norman Burmeister II apparently made no secret of his white supremacist views, displaying a Nazi flag above his bed, consorting with other soldiers in skinhead garb and disparaging blacks in conversations at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, home of his parachute infantry regiment in the renowned 82nd Airborne Division.

But when he and two comrades from the division were charged with the racially motivated murders of a black man and woman in nearby Fayetteville last week, the brutal, random nature of the crime shocked an Army town and raised alarms in the military about the presence of radicals in its ranks.

The soldiers had been out drinking and cruising the streets of Fayetteville searching for blacks to harass, police said. They said the paratroopers apparently chose their victims at random and shot them both in the head after a brief altercation.

With the arrest of a third suspect in the case, Fayetteville police said they believe they have found all the culprits.

But the FBI said it plans to investigate the murders as a civil rights case and check whether any of the three suspects' fellow soldiers were also involved. "This gives new meaning to the definition of a hate crime," a federal investigator said.

For the U.S. military, the murders of Michael James, 36, and Jackie Burden, 27, as they were walking down a Fayetteville street last week raised new questions about the presence of violent, disgruntled elements in military ranks.

Two former Army buddies who formed their association at Fort Riley, Kansas, have been indicted for the April 19 bombing of the federal building in Oklahoma City, which left 169 people dead. Only two months ago a sergeant from Clinton, Maryland, was charged with a pre-dawn sniper attack on soldiers at Fort Bragg who were warming up for a morning run. One member of the 82nd Airborne Division was killed and 18 other were wounded in that shooting.

In the wake of such incidents, Army officials have grown increasingly concerned that the public believes, rightly or wrongly, that the force harbors large numbers of men with extremist views who engage in paramilitary activities on the side. At the same time, the Army's authority to deal with a soldier's outside interests is somewhat limited, officers said.

Army regulations prohibit soldiers from active participation in groups that espouse supremacist causes, attempt to create illegal discrimination based on race, creed, religion or sex or that advocate the use of violence, the Pentagon said. Soldiers are discouraged, but not prohibited, from merely being members of such groups, receiving mail from them or attending meetings while off duty.

Maj. Rivers Johnson, a spokesman for the 82nd Airborne, said that displaying a Nazi flag in a barracks would be investigated, if someone reported it, to see if the person is an active member in such a group, but that "the mere display of a flag" would not in itself be prohibited.

Following the arrest of Burmeister, 20, and Wright, 21, on first-degree murder charges, Fayetteville police later charged a third soldier, Spec. Randy Lee Meadows, Jr., 21, with two counts of conspiracy to commit murder in the case. Police said Meadows drove the vehicle used by the killers while searching for blacks to harass.

In a search of a room rented by Burmeister in a mobile home, investigators found a Nazi flag, white supremacist literature, pamphlets on Hitler and Nazi Germany, and a videotape of the movie Natural Born Killers, said Lt. Richard Bryant, a spokesman for the Fayetteville Police Department. He said the literature included "resistance magazines." Police earlier said that a bomb-making manual was also found in the room.

The suspects appeared to be part of a right-wing, white supremacist fringe that has been active at Fort Bragg. A group calling itself the "Special Forces Underground" publishes a clandestine newsletter at Fort Bragg called "The Resister," which has railed against U.S. policy toward Haiti and the United Nations in recent issues. A policy statement published recently said the group supports "individual rights, strict constitutionalism, limited government, isolationism, laissez-faire capitalism and republicanism." It said it opposes, among other things, "liberalism, altruism, internationalism, tribalism, democracy" and "the ideologies of all tyrannies."

A private from Burmeister's platoon who asked not to be identified said in a telephone interview that Burmeister kept a Nazi flag over his bed and a 9mm handgun in his locker at the barracks they shared on the base.

Burmeister spoke of blacks in vulgar, hateful ways, the soldier said, but he did not mention whether any of this hostility was directed toward the two blacks in their own platoon.

During his off-duty hours, Burmeister associated with four or five other soldiers who all wore black boots with white laces and red suspenders, a style that represented an unofficial skinhead uniform, the soldier said.

The soldier described Burmeister as disgruntled because of an injury a year ago that left him unable to participate in parachute jumps and thus confined him to routine assignments on the headquarters staff. He said Burmeister told him his eardrums had been damaged, leaving him unable even to make helicopter flights, a severe limitation for a soldier in the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment of the Army's renowned airborne division.

Police said little is known about Wright, who belongs to the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment.

The victims, James and Burden, were accosted by Burmeister and Wright, Lt. Bryant said. "There was some type of verbal confrontation, and one of the soldiers pulled a semiautomatic handgun and shot both victims in the head," he said.

Police would not immediately identify which of the two was the suspected triggerman. In questioning, neither expressed remorse over the shooting, Bryant said.

Smart Appliances Rule the Roost

OPINION
Ellen Goodman

MY house has gradually become home to equipment that is made to do all sorts of things that I am unable to make it do. If the building were a book it would be titled: Smart Appliances, Foolish Owner.

I have an oven that would start cooking while I'm at work if I could only tell it to. I have a telephone that is ready to store the numbers of my nearest and farthest if I will only do my share. I have a CD/radio/tape deck that puts 26 separate functions in the hands of one dysfunctional operator. And I haven't even mentioned the computer.

I am not sure how this happened. The most complicated appliance under my parents' roof was a toaster whose sole duty was to pop up bread from time to time. When I was a kid, we acquired a television set. While I never really knew how television worked, I knew how to make it work.

But now every time something breaks or is sacrificed to the consumer god of planned obsolescence it is replaced by something new and improved. Which, of course, offers new and improved features.

Now, the word "features" should send every techno-challenged, simplicity-longing consumer screaming into the midnight of the mall parking lot. A feature is something that you do not want, do not want to pay extra for, will never use, but cannot get the thing you do want without.

Consider the television which entered our bedroom after its 20-year-old predecessor rained technicolor snow down upon Frasier's Seattle and collapsed. The "feature" that we wanted was a set of cordless headphones — otherwise known as the Marriage Saving Component — to allow one of us to read or sleep while the other watched various large men pursuing various shaped balls across various shaped playing fields.

For reasons too arcane to mention, having to do with cable companies and astrological signs, the only television set that met this requirement came with the following features: a picture within a picture, wraparound sound, a clock, a timer, an on-screen menu, a channel caption guide, a remote control that could run a 747 and a price tag roughly the equivalent of the one on my first car.

Six months later, I have yet to figure out how — let alone why — to watch two pictures at once. The television sits there in mute (or wraparound stereo) disapproval. It's added to the queasy, guilty sensation, utterly unknown to my grandparents, that I am not measuring up to my own possessions. And I haven't even mentioned the computer.

The proof that my era is higher-tech than I am is in the fact that every purchase now comes with a textbook known as an owner's manual, or worse, an operator's manual. The plow did not come with an operating manual. Nor did the toaster.

I have, by actual count, eight manuals, many of which were written by the same salaryman who majored in Egyptian hieroglyphics and reads S-and-M comics on the way to work. One of these textbooks is 38 pages long and the only chapter I have mastered is called: "Watching the TV."

The way I figure it, a fully equipped American family can either learn what's in the manuals or what's in the national budget. In roughly the same amount of time, they can master their equipment or the intricacies of chaos theory.

And, oh, did I mention the computer?

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995

Speaking Out Against the President

Stephen F. Cohen listens to four of the leading figures who oppose Yeltsin

WITH PARLIAMENTARY elections scheduled in Russia for December 17, gray stereotypes are again misleading Americans about that country's multicolored political realities and possibilities, much as they did during the long Cold War.

We speak of Russia's "transition" to Western-style democracy and markets, while in fact the nation is more torn than ever by large historical and contemporary factors scarcely reported in the US media. We imagine a "post-Soviet" Russia, as though that vast and traditional society has somehow leapt out of its past, while old patterns remain more pervasive in politics, economics and everyday life than anything new created since the Soviet Union ended in December 1991.

Most simplistically, the US government and media alike reduce Russia's political spectrum, and thus its choices, to "reformers" headed (sometimes imperfectly) by President Boris Yeltsin and a dread "hard-line red-brown opposition" of unreconstructed Communists and reactionary nationalists personified by the extremist Vladimir Zhirinovsky, whose party's strong showing in parliamentary elections two years ago so surprised and frightened the West.

In reality, opposition to Yeltsin and his policies since 1991 now encompasses a broad spectrum of political outlooks, movements and leaders, from pro-Western liberals and social-democratic nationalists to Soviet-style authoritarians and quasi-fascists. Indeed, according to opinion polls, the opposition includes an overwhelming majority of potential voters. If so, oppositionists America barely knows and largely shuns may soon come to power in Russia, if not fully on December 17, then in the presidential election that is supposed to take place in June.

What follows are edited excerpts from interviews with four of Russia's most important opposition leaders. The four men interviewed will lead their parties in the parliamentary elections, and all four are already declared or likely presidential candidates.

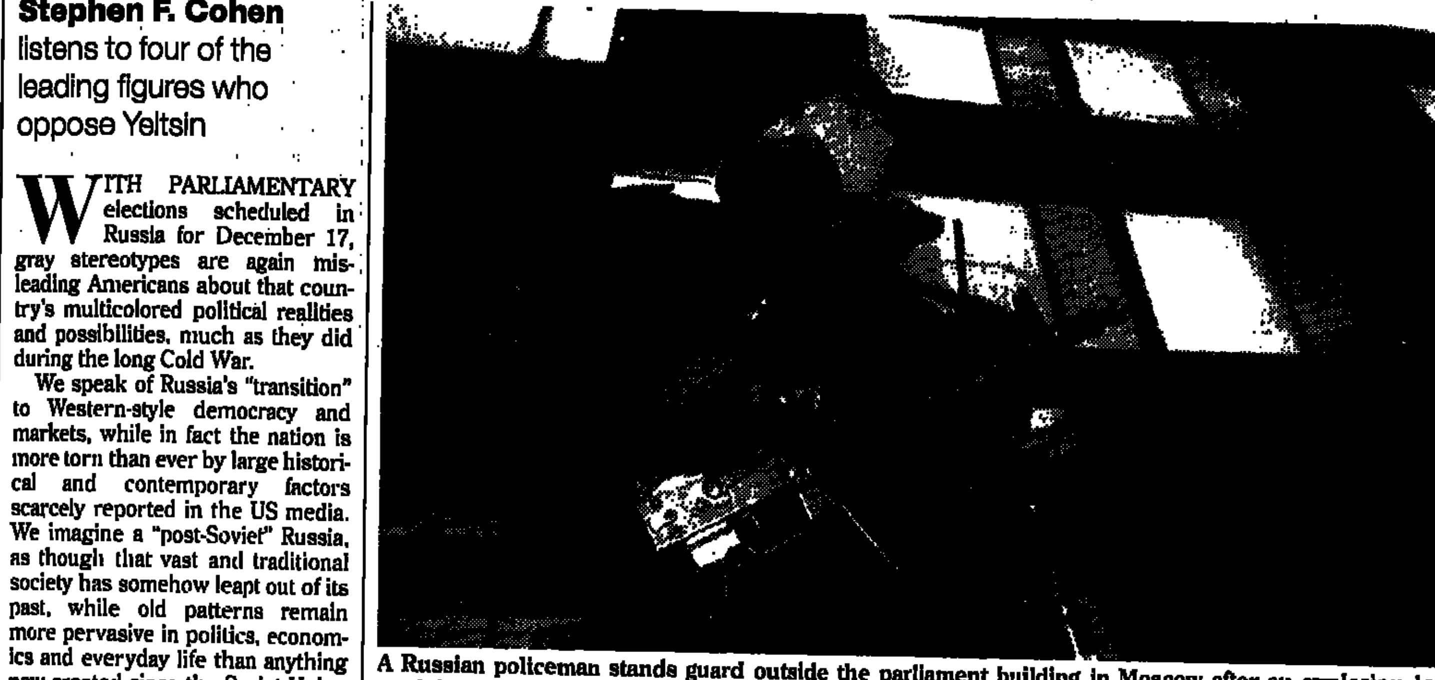
Grigory Yavlinsky, 43, is the foremost leader of the liberal democratic opposition. An English-speaking economist whose Yabloko Party is influential in the current Duma, or parliament, his support is primarily among urban professionals and "new Russians" who welcomed the opportunities opened by post-communist reforms.

Gennady Zyuganov, 51, a onetime school teacher and former Soviet Communist official who holds a PhD in political philosophy, heads the resurgent Russian Communist Party, the biggest and best organized party in the country. It has an even larger Duma contingent and recently swept local elections in several cities.

Alexander Rutskoi, 48, a retired air force general and Yeltsin's deposed vice president, is running as an outsider against the entire political establishment. Jailed for four months after siding with the previous parliament in the constitutional and ultimately violent confrontation with President Yeltsin in September and October 1993, Rutskoi is stalking the provinces with a "patriotic" movement called Great Power.

Alexander Lebed, 45, is the newest would-be leader on the political scene but currently the most popular in polls. A maverick combat general who quit the army in June after a series of outspoken protests against the Yeltsin regime, Lebed now is co-leader of a nationalist movement, the Congress of Russian Communities, with ties to Russian industrial and defense producers.

Though divided over important issues, none of these opposition leaders has anything good to say about Yeltsin's leadership today or, except for Yavlinsky, about anything he has done. In failing health and with his own approval ratings in single digits, Yeltsin and his standard bearers might find hope in one circumstance: The oppositionists don't have much good to say about each other either.



A Russian policeman stands guard outside the parliament building in Moscow after an explosion last week in the office of Nikolai Lysenko, leader of the far-right Republican Party

Grigory Yavlinsky

"The mistake is thinking that Yeltsin represents the country, the people — or as you Americans say, is Russia's first freely elected president. First of all, he was elected [in June 1991] not in Russia but in the Soviet Union, as governor of one part of the Soviet Union. Second, he has violated the constitution under which he was elected. We have some kind of half way democracy. Everyone can say whatever he wants, the press is comparatively free, but the authorities do whatever they want. There is no linkage and no civil society yet.

"Leaders of the United States come to our country and ask President Yeltsin, 'What are you doing here?' He says, 'I am making radical reform.' They say, 'Great,' and shake his hand. The Russian people see this and say, we like American politicians, they are attractive and look smart, but they do not understand anything going on in our country. They say nothing about what it means to live with 2,000 percent inflation, a 50 percent decline in production, crime, corruption and all that.

"Russians have always had a very specific feeling about their leaders. They can forgive 2,000 percent inflation. They can forgive crazy privatization. They can forgive many things. But they can't forgive national shame. They will never forgive a leader if his personal behavior is terrible, especially abroad. And this has often happened in Yeltsin's case.

"Our revolution is still in its first day. We have no real private property, no de-monopolization. We still have the same Soviet Communist leaders in power. Mr. Yeltsin was a member of the Communist Party Politburo, and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin was a minister in the Soviet government. So people feel we have the same leadership with the same mentality.

"The task for me and my generation is not to create a new system in Russia, as previous leaders have tried to do, but to give the people a chance to find out what kind of system they want.

"I want Russia to have not simply a market economy but an effective market economy, not simply an anti-totalitarian regime but a working democracy. I want to liberate the people from the previous system and from this quasi-democratic system we have today."

Gennady Zyuganov

"Yeltsin is the West's new false idol. He was never a democrat and can never be one. He and his circle have a hundred times the privileges the Politburo had. They have a strong hold on power and are trying to tighten it.

"Russia is on the edge of an abyss. The situation is worse than during World War II. Not only are our spiritual and moral foundations being destroyed, but also our economic and social foundations. We are becoming a semi-colonial country. Competitive industries are being liquidated. Highly educated specialists are being discarded. Practically the entire country is in opposition to Yeltsin, except the new rich, who make up about five percent.

"I fear a great catastrophe. This road is turning Russia into an enormous Chechnya or a giant Colombia with nuclear weapons and submarines. The only way out is honest democratic elections, which will result in a moderate, responsible, professional government able to rid the country of the consequences of these neo-liberal policies and introduce policies natural to Russia and its traditions before and after 1917. Such policies will not threaten Russia's neighbors or its new friends.

"We [the Communist Party and its left-bloc allies] want to restore our economy, provide social guarantees to people who cannot survive without them, give young people the opportunity of a normal education, and enable all talented people to realize their potential . . . Our main goal is to restore law, human rights and the power of the people. All this will be done strictly according to the law. We are against repression and expropriation.

"If someone has acquired property legally, it must only be corroborated. If property was acquired illegally, it must be looked into. We are against monopolizing everything again. The Communist Party was already defeated once by having monopolized power and property. We are for a socially oriented market and an economy based on state, collective and private sectors, the proportions being determined by Russian traditions.

"I want your politicians to understand that the Volga River never flowed into the Mississippi and never will, that Russia's traditions differ greatly from America's and that there can be no united Europe or stable Eurasia without Russia. Most importantly, don't impose your cultural stereotypes on us, because it results only in anti-Americanism. This worries me a great deal."

Alexander Rutskoi

"Patriotism is love of one's country and people. I want my people to be able to live as dignified individuals while feeling they are part of a great nation.

"Yeltsin, Chernomyrdin and [former acting prime minister] Yegor Gaidar aren't patriots because they don't love their country. Look what they've done to the country. In your Great Depression, industrial production fell by 30 percent, but here it has already fallen by 50 percent. That is the de-industrialization of the country, which means a loss of economic independence and then political independence. It means we are becoming — I'd like to hear you Americans say it — a colony. No, they aren't patriots, they are criminals.

"Americans say Yeltsin means stability in Russia, but look at four years of his rule. He attacked the parliament with tanks, which no civilized country would allow. There is nothing resembling democracy, only lawlessness and chaos. There is war in the Caucasus, tens of thousands have died, terrorism is spreading through the country. Ninety percent of the populace is impoverished. And while children are dying and hospitals have no medicine, look at what [the authorities] are spending on the president's security and housing for themselves. We are on the threshold of an explosion. The country is humiliated, there's blood everywhere. But there is a limit. Pray to God that the bear, as we say, doesn't awake.

"Stability requires real democracy, which above all means that everyone has equal rights and responsibilities under the law, from the president to workers. I defended the law and the constitution in October 1993 . . .

"If Yeltsin had taken my advice when I was vice president, Russia would be stable today. He no longer exists for me. He is a fallen personality, an alcoholic, a sick man. He understood long ago that he was politically bankrupt. That's why he drinks. He can't control his own entourage, which is awash with corruption."

Alexander Lebed

"Zhirinovsky is a scarecrow created by Yeltsin to frighten the West . . . They've created a myth that Yeltsin and Zhirinovsky are the only alternatives in a nation of 148 million people.

"The West is grateful to Yeltsin for destroying the entire power structure here, the system of socialism. He broke some things that needed breaking, but he's destroyed almost everything else in the process . . . Yeltsin will never leave power voluntarily because four questions hang over his head. Who is responsible for the destruction of the Soviet Union? For the attack on parliament in 1993? For a privatization that benefited 5 to 7 percent of the population and left 80 percent destitute or half-destitute? And for the war in Chechnya? He will find a way to cancel the presidential election.

"We don't have any democracy, only decorative institutions, which are for you in the West . . . I don't advocate capitalism or socialism; all that is ideological hallucination. What matters is what works. We won't have a market economy for a long time because 90 percent of the people do not understand it.

"For Russia to get up off its knees and revive, people must feel they are owners, masters of their capital and profits . . . We have to create a middle class, because a state is only as strong as its middle class. There should not be too many very rich or very poor people at the extremes . . . Look at the Chinese. Their circumstances were worse, but they found a smooth path to market economics by going slow.

"The Soviet Union cannot be brought back. Instead, there will be a confederation of independent states . . . by the end of the century.

"[As for your question about General Augusto Pinochet's rule in Chile], during his 16 years in power he killed 3,500 people . . . We kill more in a single day. But Pinochet's so-called bloody regime lifted Chile from the ruins, forced everybody to work, revived the economy, restored a feeling of ownership among the people and then legally turned power over to a civilian government. But I am not the Russian Pinochet or the Russian de Gaulle. I am the Russian General Lebed."

Stephen F. Cohen is professor of politics and Russian studies at Princeton University.

High-Rise Builder

Witold Rybczynski

I.M. PEI
Mandarin Of Modernism
By Michael Cannell
Carol Southern. 402 pp. $35

AT THE TIME of the recent opening of Cleveland's Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum — or, rather, the I. M. Pei-designed Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum, as it was invariably called — I heard a radio interview with one of the museum officials, who was asked about the famous architect. "Wasn't it odd that Mr. Pei, who is a self-proclaimed lover of classical music and who doesn't listen to rock and roll, was chosen to be the designer?" asked the interviewer. "Not at all," answered the official, "we specifically wanted him because we knew that the Pei name would be recognized and would give credibility to the whole project."

There are not many contemporary American architects who carry that sort of prestige. Philip Johnson, perhaps, or Frank Gehry? But Johnson, despite his celebrity, has never received a commission for a nationally important civic monument; neither (yet) has Gehry. Pei on the other hand, had designed two of them: the East Building of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C., and the overhaul of the Louvre Museum in Paris.

Yet Pei is not universally admired in the architectural world. Although his office has been the training ground for dozens of talented architects, there aren't any Pei disciples, as there were Mies van der Rohe disciples or Louis Kahn disciples. Nor does there appear to be a Pei philosophy of design. "He's not a design influence," Philip Johnson told Michael Cannell, the author of this new biography of Pei, "he's just Mr. Success."

Why is the best-known architect in America, who has been commissioned to build some of the most important buildings here and abroad, not also acclaimed by his peers? Is this a reflection of the shallowness of modern celebrity, or is it, perhaps, an indictment of the rest of the architectural profession, which has grown increasingly estranged from the values of the public it purports to serve, and is more interested in a "body of theory" than in beautiful buildings? Pei's buildings are undecorated, sleek and impeccably detailed — the architectural equivalent of a Mercedes-Benz.

Throughout his career, Pei has been a steadfast architectural modernist, even during the 1970s and '80s when modernism became distinctly unfashionable. Nevertheless, although so-called postmodern design was supposed to be more accessible, more user-friendly, one might say, it was precisely the modernist Pei's buildings that were popular with the public and equally popular with a distinguished series of patrons from Jacqueline Kennedy to Francois Mitterrand. How does Pei manage to turn cool modernism into such hot stuff?

Cannell struggles mightily with these questions, and if he doesn't provide a satisfactory resolution, he does give the reader many useful and interesting insights into the way that architecture is practiced today.

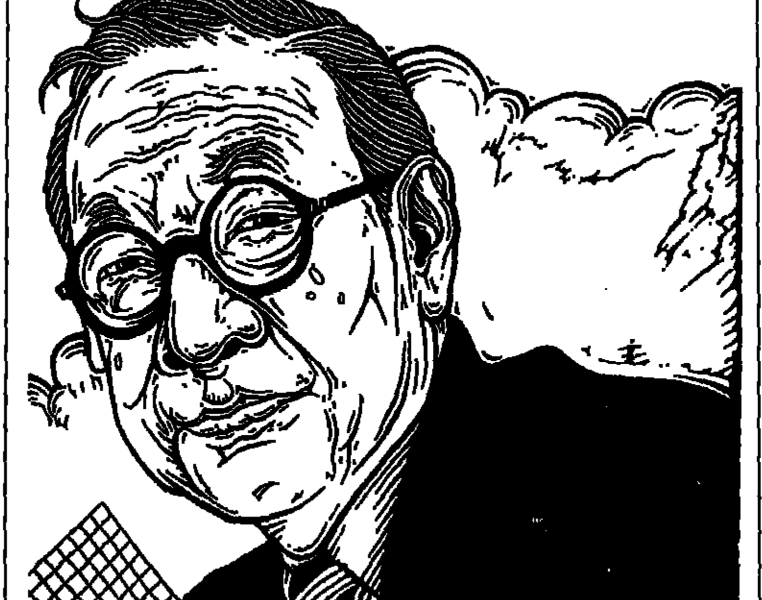


ILLUSTRATION: TERRY E. SMITH

Cannell is a journalist, not an architectural critic, and he sometimes seems unsure of his subject, which causes him to lean on outsiders' opinions as regards Pei's designs. Unfortunately it doesn't produce a coherent analysis of the work.

On the other hand, Cannell is a conscientious journalist, and he describes the actual business of architecture thoroughly and engagingly. This book provides a clearer description of how large commercial buildings get designed and built than any other I have read.

Indeed, it was in the hard school of commercial architecture that Pei cut his teeth. For more than a decade, between 1948 and 1960, he was the house architect at Webb and Knapp, the giant real estate company run by William Zeckendorf. This was the period of downtown urban renewal, and Webb and Knapp built apartment and office towers in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Washington, Boston, Denver and Montreal. Pei and his assistants designed them all.

It was not easy to manage a transition from successful commercial architect to high-fashion architect, but Pei managed it as smoothly as he had earlier transformed himself from an effete junior Harvard professor to Zeckendorf's golden boy. Pei had been a graduate student at Harvard under Walter Gropius, who was so impressed with the young Chinese émigré that he immediately offered him a teaching job. Pei's presence in the United States was something of an accident. Born in Suzhou and raised in Shanghai, Ieoh Ming Pei was the son of a prosperous banker, and had been sent to America to study architecture. He graduated from M.I.T. in 1940, but by then China had been invaded by Japan and his father counseled him to stay where he was. He enrolled in Harvard and, when America entered the war, interrupted his studies to volunteer to serve with a wartime intelligence agency. When Pei finally graduated from Harvard in 1945, China was in the midst of a civil war, and he was still stuck. By 1949, with the communists victorious, it became clear that for Pei there would be no going back. America would be his home.

Pei's professional life has had many ups and downs. His decision to work for Zeckendorf marked him in the eyes of many as a talented but commercial hack, a reputation he would work hard to reverse. The Hancock Tower suffered an embarrassing and well-publicized technical failure (eventually all the windows had to be replaced). The Louvre commission was a cultural minefield and almost didn't get executed. Throughout, the architect persevered. Evidently, Pei is an exceptional person, yet he is so withdrawn and impenetrable — Cannell obviously had very little access to his subject — that he remains almost a bystander in his own biography. This book is a satisfactory exploration of the background of Pei's professional achievements, but it's "too bad," as Philip Johnson is quoted as saying, "one can't grasp the man himself."

How to Play the Color Card

Judy Scales-Trent

RACIAL HEALING
Confronting the Fear Between Blacks and Whites
By Harlan L. Dalton
Doubleday. 246 pp. $22.50

ON THE FACE of it, this is a straightforward, uncomplicated "how-to" book, describing what black and white Americans can do to bridge the racial divide. But under this apparent simplicity, Dalton, a black law professor at Yale University, explores deeper questions: What does it mean to be black? To "act black"? What is "the black community"?

In the "how-to" book Dalton says: "We will never achieve racial healing if we do not confront each other, take risks, make ourselves vulnerable, put pride aside, say all the things we are not supposed to say in mixed company — in short, put on the table all of our fears, trepidations, wishes, and hopes." But first, he writes, both blacks and whites need to "get our respective houses in order" — change how we think and act, and give up some of what we value. In this book, his role is to mark the path.

In "What White Folk Must Do," he says that they must acknowledge their privileged position in the racial hierarchy, accept joint ownership of America's race problem, eliminate the myth that blacks can simply lift themselves up by their bootstraps, and resist the temptation to pit blacks against both blacks and other people of color. In "What Blacks Must Do," Dalton suggests that blacks learn to retell the story of American racism so as to address troubling questions, such as why it is that some blacks succeed and others fail, or why earlier generations of blacks survived despite virulent racism. He also suggests that blacks pull together as a community, and that they face their prejudice against other people of color.

This "how-to" book is written in a colloquial, engaging and self-reflective manner. Its simple, straightforward quality is very appealing.

But this is just a summary of the surface of the book. Early on, somewhere between his conversation with a white neighbor and the "how-to" sections, there is a 20-page digression on racial identity. Here, Dalton concludes that racial boundaries are now becoming more fluid and that this is not necessarily good, as it might divide the black community along the lines of color, class and culture. He describes how blacks "police" the racial boundary by, for example, taunting other blacks for "acting white," and argues that what matters is not "whether a black person talks, acts, or performs white, but whether it appears that she would prefer to be white."

At first, I thought this was just an example of bad editing: How did this fit into a discussion of how to engage the issue of race? But the theme returns in "What Black Folk Must Do," where Dalton tries to define what "being black" entails and what "the black community" might be. He tells of a black law student who did not want to join an organization of black law students: she "look[ed] black," but didn't know how to "be black." Should she be excluded from the black community?

Dalton also says that one reason blacks don't want to make peace with whites is a fear of cultural loss. He describes his personal fear of becoming detached from his roots. He wonders what would happen if racial differences were eliminated. Black and white voices are different, he claims: Would the blues then be different? Dalton doesn't really want to let go of racial differences, he says; he just wants to end the use of race as a tool of power. But then, he asks what does race mean, if not power?

These questions about race — defining the black community, asking whether there is such a thing as "being black" and whether it includes "acting black" — provide a powerful ground note in a book that appears, on the surface, merely to set out guidelines for better relations between the races. Dalton shows us his struggle to maintain his connections with the black community, his confusion, and his terrible fear of loss. And this is a powerful lesson, for it raises the question of whether white Americans experience a comparable fear and confusion as they grapple with the idea of a more porous boundary between races.

But I disagree with much of what Dalton says about racial identity. As one of the many black Americans with light skin, I know there is no such thing as "looking black" and I would love to hear Jessye Norman's comments about black and white voices being different! But I am clear that Dalton has touched on a crucial issue, for there will be no racial healing in America until we figure out what race is and why we work so hard to create racial categories and maintain racial borders.

All in Good Time

Bruno Maddox

LONGITUDE
The True Story of a Lone Genius Who Solved the Greatest Scientific Problem of His Time
By Dava Sobel
Walker. 184 pp. $19

LONGITUDE opens in a splatterfest of maritime disaster. A scurvied sailor confronts the sprawl of featureless ocean where his home port should have been as his body's last shred of connective tissue dissolves in its natural acids.

That was how it went if you were an early-18th-century seaman: Fatally long voyages and deadly course miscalculations were commonplace, simply because longitude — the angular distance east or west on the earth's surface, measured in degrees along any latitude line (e.g., the Equator) — could not be determined in open sea from the positions of the sun and stars. So integral did longitude's "discovery" become to any reasonable projection of human progress that the English parliament offered £20,000 — many millions of dollars today — to the person who could figure out how to calculate it at sea.

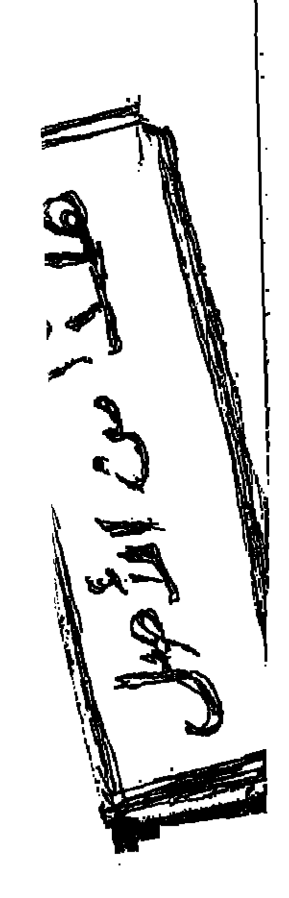
Early solutions to the problem were as stupid as the prize was huge. Humphrey Ditton's proposal to anchor a network of marker-ships over the Atlantic was scrapped partly due to the realization that anyone manning such a station would probably go mad. What the longitude debate badly needed was a contribution from someone who was not an utter moron.

An unlikely candidate emerged in the shape of clockmaker John Harrison, a bluff northerner with no formal education and no training in his craft. Common sense, however, was firmly on the man's side. While the scientific luminaries of his age threw themselves into sheaves of astrological logarithms and the invention of complex, multi-lensed observing instruments, Harrison decided to build a clock that kept good time. As even Sir Kenelm Digby had observed, for every 15 degrees east or west that one sailed from one's home port there would be a difference of one hour. If one could somehow keep track of the time at one's home port, the longitude problem would simply disappear. So low, however, was the standard of clockmaking at the time that Harrison's solution was publicly derided as an insanely roundabout approach to the problem.

Unfazed, Harrison retreated to his workshop and spent the next 46 years building five or six weatherproof and motionproof sea-clocks. Periodically — though his third clock took him 20 years — Harrison would present himself before the Board of Longitude in London where he would successfully extract a stipend for further research.

Eventually, King George III intervened and ensured at least that Harrison died a wealthy man.

Longitude is a simple tale, brilliantly told. Sobel offers us no attack on the modern assumption that time is solid and objective; she wholly refrains from rubbing readers' noses in the artificiality of meaning, etc.; she offers us nothing, in short, but measured, nearly perfect prose and a magnificent story, an extraordinary book.



Le Monde

Juppé takes one small step

EDITORIAL

TAKING advantage of the debate on the motion of no-confidence in the government tabled by the Socialists, the French prime minister, Alain Juppé, who had maintained a studied silence for days on end, finally broke it on December 5.

The occasion allowed him to admit to the error of his methods, which has led him to prefer secrecy to public explanation. However, it is uncertain whether the step he has taken is sufficient at a time when the conflict is trying to work up a new head of steam.

But Juppé failed to create the opening that would help defuse the current tension quickly, because what he said and the way he said it were marked by a technocratic stiffness that revealed that he was not backing away from any part of his project. We will see in the coming days whether his move will prevent the protest from spreading, whether it is part of an attempt to allow the movement to wither away, or whether it is a way of exploiting the divisions in labour union ranks.

After six months of shilly-shallying, which has weakened his authority, Juppé has raised his voice and given the impression that he is tempted take a hard line.

This is how the labour unions, especially the FO and the CGT, have perceived his address to the country. At any rate, if the message was designed to show new flexibility on the prime minister's part, it is unclear where he has given in.

Separating the social security issue from the question of special pension schemes, as urged by Jean Gandois, head of the CNPF (National Council of French Employers) as well as some government members of parliament, is a step in the right direction.

None the less, the fact is that Juppé has left unresolved a number of doubts about the guarantees he says that he is ready to give. Promising not to do away with special pension schemes or bring them into line with the national system does not mean there is a readiness to maintain their specific advantages. Even though these advantages are questionable in the eyes of private sector employees, the demand for them to be maintained is central to the claims being made today.

It is not limited to technical issues. It reveals deep-seated unease, the fear of the future shared by others, which apparently explains the French public's somewhat indulgent attitude towards the strikes.

Similarly, the fact that the government has appointed a committee to look into the subject does not mean that the strike will go away. "Consultation" has replaced "dialogue", but it it is not yet "negotiation", which is the next indispensable step.

Louis Viannet, the CGT leader, and his counterpart, Marc Blondel in the FO, are doing what is expected of them when they point out that Juppé carefully avoided the word "negotiation". They are still being true to their union commitments when they say they are ready for discussions. But for the moment, Juppé does not seem willing to commit himself to this course. And it is not that he is doing so merely out of pride.

Could it be simply that it is still too soon? With the stage being set for the second act of the conflict, there are a few tactical considerations that require him to play for time. The CGT is in congress. The FO cannot lose face, and the forces involved in the conflict have not perhaps exhausted their resources. It will take a little time before the next move is made, if it is made at all. What a waste of time for everybody.

(December 7)

Juppé optimiste



Alain Juppé to Marc Blondel (leader of the striking public sector workers): 'Oh, it's snowing! Soon it'll be Christmas!'

Private sector workers fear the future, but stay at work

Frédéric Lemaitre

DESPITE union calls for a widening of the strikes that have affected large parts of the French public sector, the private sector has suffered few stoppages.

The management of Renault said its Douai plant was unaffected by labour unrest. At the Flins plant, 107 out of 8,000 workers walked off their jobs for two hours on December 5. At Le Mans, a CGT stronghold, a third of the workers stopped work for three hours. But nowhere has industrial output been interrupted.

Some managers are surprised by the calm in the private sector. Via-GTI, a private transport firm whose coaches are being used to relieve the pressure on suburban commuters hit by rail and bus strikes, says that none of its drivers has refused to work. "Some of them have uneasy consciences but they know they'll be getting a bonus and that we scrupulously respect their rest times," says a company spokesman.

When private employees do go on strike, it is generally for specific ends. Elf-Atochem employees, for example, are demonstrating for their jobs. The Société Générale bank union members are calling for a strike on December 12.

"The larger companies are more worried by the government's amateurish handling of the social question than by the possibility of the conflict spreading to the private sector," says Jean-Paul Jacquier, a business consultant.

In an internal document, the CFDT union chapter representing the chemical industry explains why it is not urging a strike in the private sector. "Private sector wage earners consider that reforming the social security system is, on the whole, a step in the right direction, despite the negative aspects that we want very much to be reviewed. The state is not their employer, and consequently cannot respond directly to their demands concerning jobs, working conditions, pay and control over their company's industrial policies . . . There is the idea of taking part in a social uprising that is justified by the discontent we all share and aimed at obtaining real social changes. Playing at bringing down the government in this context is more politicking than union activity."

A CFDT leader in Brittany admits: "The pressure is terrible in company offices, but we're trying not to confuse the issues."

However, the near-absence of private sector employees from this conflict does not mean that they are satisfied.

"Discontent is widespread," says Michel Huc, general secretary of the FO's metallurgical section. "People don't know any more why they're being asked to make an effort. It's almost a strike by proxy. Many employees in our sectors are on part-time and don't have the means for taking part in street demonstrations." An FO official in the agribusiness sector agreed that discontent was widespread, but he publicly opposed his union leader on the way the latter was managing the conflict.

Business is under no illusion. "Employees are husbanding their resources for the day when they feel directly attacked," says the management of the Chantiers de l'Atlantique shipyard.

"There is a kind of uneasiness. People are not ready to go on strike, but the next round of wage bargaining will be tough," predicts the Via-GTI management.

"The problem," says the head of Human Resources at Dassault Aviation, "is buying power. The suppression of the F42 tax allowance, increased VAT and the future repayment of the social debt, will shift the burden on to wage earners."

An employers' spokesman points out: "Employees are far from overjoyed, but they're ready to pull together to save their company. Even so, if the company boss keeps doing things like getting his bathroom redone at company expense while asking his employees to make more sacrifices, it's guaranteed to backfire on him."

Is the present calm in the private sector really more reassuring than the convulsions in the public sector?

(December 7)

Taiwan's example unsettles China

Beijing is becoming concerned by the growth of democracy around it. **Francis Deron** reports from Taipei

THE world is going to have to get used to a new reality — democracy is not incompatible with the Chinese cultural universe.

This fact has just been demonstrated by Taiwan's 21 million inhabitants. The demonstration is all the more praiseworthy because the Taiwanese have had to put up with a hostile environment as a result of their country's being an international outcast.

Over the past five years, the island has been regularly lending itself to the exercise of democracy without any major problems. Political liberalisation has been going on for a decade without the convulsions that other Asian countries in transition, such as South Korea, have experienced. The leading architects of democratisation have not been touched either by massacres or the whiff of serious scandal.

The context in which the December 2 parliamentary elections were held was not calculated to favour calm. For the previous six months Beijing had been carrying out an uninterrupted series of military exercises and insulting Taiwan's president while presenting him with a variety of demands.

What is most striking is the low-key response of western nations to the transformation taking place on an island which, though small, is rich, dynamic and far more ready than mainland China to participate fully in international economic and political life.

The reason is that the process under way in Taiwan, which will culminate in March with the first fully democratic election of a head of state, goes against western policy.

First, it contradicts the almost universally received view that China, as a cultural entity, has to be politically united according to its own nationals' unanimous wishes. Only 13 per cent of the electorate holds this view in Taiwan. The rest are divided between those who favour independence — one-third of the votes cast in the recent election — and those who want to preserve the status quo *vis-à-vis* the mainland for as long as uncertainties remain about a transition towards political modernity.

Second, the argument that the Chinese as a whole would instinctively shun the conflicts arising out of a democratic process and opt instead for the consensual mode — a line promoted by proponents of moderate authoritarianism like that in Singapore — also collapses.

The fact that Taiwanese democracy occasionally gets out of hand — fisticuffs in parliament, street brawls, financial scandals, etc — did not prevent a turn-out of more than 67 per cent in the parliamentary elections. And this after a series of elections that could have induced voter fatigue. Voting levels of this order are not so frequent in western democracies for their leaders not to pay attention to this island.

The West's attitude towards the Chinese people's aspirations has long been been shaped by what their leaders say. Applied to Taiwan, this has given rise to the diplomatically convenient dogma that it is exclusively a matter of "Chinese internal affairs". While speaking in the Chinese people's name was already tricky when they could hardly express their own views, it no longer applies where voting has replaced the cudgel and the bayonet, as in Taiwan.

The message given by Taiwanese voters is that economic modernity invalidates a good part of Beijing's imperial logic of placing sovereignty before everything else. It is not that the Taiwanese don't feel they are Chinese. All those who have been here for several generations or since 1949 participate fully in the Chinese cultural sphere. But this does not encourage the Taiwanese to accept peremptory orders from the Chinese Communist Party, which wants to go on running an empire the size of a continent in the old way.

It seems almost impossible for Beijing's rulers to take this fact on board. The difficult succession awaiting Deng Xiaoping's heirs, and the ideological breakdown following the collapse of communism that is prodding the leadership towards nationalism, prevent it from doing a significant turn on the Taiwanese question. Judging by Beijing's recent behaviour, not only over Taiwan but also in other crises and areas of tension, its attitude could even harden.

Prudence therefore requires that China's threats of military intervention in Taiwan should not be dismissed out of hand.

(December 5)

French troops take sides in Sarajevo

French UN officers in Bosnia have encouraged Serb fighters to resist the reunification of the capital. **Rémy Ourdan** reports from Sarajevo

SUPPORTED by Paris, Unprofor's French officers are rushing to the rescue of the Serbs who have been besieging Sarajevo for the past three and a half years. They are doing it "in the defence of France".

Ever since the Dayton agreement on peace in Bosnia was reached, these UN officers have come out in support of the Bosnian capital's separatist Serbs, even going so far as to back their rejection of the peace plan.

Instead of persuading the extremists to comply with the peace plan, French officers are encouraging them to flout the wishes of the international community. They justify their conduct on the grounds that they are looking after France's interests — in particular the army's image — amid fears that violent disturbances might break out in the coming weeks. Some officers, whose mission is to mediate, have turned into fully fledged advisers to the Serbs, particularly in communications.

Unprofor is today becoming the spokesman for the soldiers in Ilidza, Grbavica and Vogosca, the three Serb areas that have to be turned over to the Bosnians as part of the plan to "reunify" the capital.

French officers are advising the Serbs on how best to handle public opinion. They lobby heavily among journalists and the main television networks on behalf of their clients. At the same time, the French military staff in Sarajevo keep sending alarmist reports back to Paris invoking the "defence of France's universal values" and the "impossible challenge the army has been set".

This campaign has produced results that have exceeded all expectations. President Jacques Chirac has personally written to President Bill Clinton expressing his concern about the future of the Serbs living in the three areas in question.

The French command favours a de facto amendment of the peace plan. "If renegotiating the plan all over again is not on the cards, other details need to be incorporated in it," says the Unprofor commander General Jean-René Bachelet, whose influence in Paris is said to run right up to the presidential office. [Gen Bachelet was recalled to Paris on December 4 for his controversial remarks to the press criticising the Dayton accord.]

He was supported by the commander of the UN forces in Bosnia, General Janvier, and by General de Lapresle, who is the military adviser to the European Union envoy, Carl Bildt.

"No, we will not go along with 'ethnic cleansing'," says Gen Bachelet, speaking about the possibility of frightened Serbs fleeing their homes when the Bosnian police move into their neighbourhoods.

But it is precisely by supporting the neighbourhoods of Ilidza and Grbavica that Unprofor is countenancing ethnic purification. Muslim and Croat residents of these neighbourhoods, where they used to be in a majority, have been killed or driven out and their homes have been seized by the Serbs, who have been busy trying to divide Sarajevo since 1992. "Ethnic cleansing" is the reason why a handful of extremists want the Dayton agreement to be amended. But 99 per cent of the Serbs in former Yugoslavia are happy with the agreement as it stands.

"We'll never live with the Muslims," say Ilidza's Serbs.

"Is that so? Then goodbye," was the retort of a Sarajevan woman. "I'm Serb, too, but I live on the Bosnian side, for I have refused to murder my city. Sarajevo will never be a Serb or Muslim city. Sarajevo will always be Sarajevo, where we have always lived together. Those who want to live in an 'ethnically pure' state had better withdraw into the half of Bosnia they have been given under the peace plan. Let them go and live in Srebrenica! Their army has prepared the ground."



Reading between the lines . . . French UN soldiers appear to have taken the Serbs' side in Sarajevo PHOTOGRAPH: PETER ANDREWS

She added that some 50,000 Serbs, Muslims and others are waiting for the Serb army to withdraw so that they can return to their homes in Grbavica and elsewhere.

Against all expectations, the French officers are supporting the last Serb fighters holding out in Sarajevo. They provide the Serb nationalists with a channel for conducting an intense media and political campaign.

But why is the French army taking part in this conflict? Observers point to a pro-Serb tradition among French officers, inherited from military academies and history textbooks. They also mention anti-Muslim racism. Indeed, one Serb officer from Ilidza, where residents treat all Sarajevans as "Turks" or "mojahedin", now speaks of "Bosnioules" (a pun on the French *bougnoule*, an offensive term meaning "wog"). He must have picked up the word during the daily lunches with French officers, as it is totally alien to Yugoslavia's Serbo-Croat language.

And yet, General Bachelet, a brilliant senior officer who has a reputation for making finely argued analyses, is neither pro-Serb nor a "Bosnioule" hater.

"The Dayton agreement leads straight to a dead end," he says. "For the Serbs living in these neighbourhoods, the choice will be between the suitcase and the coffin. I reject the idea of my soldiers being condemned to helping in an exodus of Serbs, who will torch their homes before they leave. If the Serbs are forced to remain, I also reject the idea of the Bosnians and Americans blaming France for the non-application of the peace plan. French troops will be in the front line because, under the Nato plan, they are in charge of Sarajevo."

According to a British officer: "The French are going about wrecking the Dayton agreement's fragile equilibrium because they're afraid they'll get involved in the fighting. It's true the Americans have an oversimplified view of the situation, with good Bosnians and bad Serbs. But by supporting and advising the Serbs, the French are encouraging them to resist. One musn't moan afterwards if violent clashes break out between the Ilidza Serbs and the international forces. I get the impression the French army is manipulating Paris to some extent."

Though claiming to protect France's image and the lives of its soldiers, the army is having the opposite effect and creating political instability. It is throwing its support behind nationalists for whom the Dayton agreement admittedly offers no other solution but exile from a city that they have subjected to a severe pummelling.

"I'm ashamed for France," said one woman. "When I learned of Chirac's message to Clinton, I realised that Sarajevo had once again lost a friend." Serb nationalist television, on the other hand, expressed satisfaction with Chirac's initiative.

"It's a disgrace to compare Sarajevo's Serbs with the thugs in Ilidza," added the woman. "Sarajevo's Serbs are either abroad, or living in Sarajevo on the Bosnian side. Only a tiny minority went to those districts and took part in the Serb army's destruction of the city."

For Sarajevans — whether Muslim, Serb or Croat — measures to promote security in the capital will have to begin with the departure of the "murderers" in Ilidza and Grbavica.

(December 2)

Recession makes Venezuelans swallow bitter medicine

Marcel Niedergang in Caracas finds that the country is living on the edge of a social volcano

TWO YEARS after Rafael Caldera's return to the presidency — "two years of problems and suffering" — he is cautiously initiating a strategy to deal with the worst crisis in Venezuela's recent history.

"You could never understand the current situation," says the president, "unless you remember the dramatic banking crisis we inherited in 1993. We were teetering on the brink of a collapse. My government bailed out more than 3 million small investors. That was a great feat. We also inherited the consequences of the corruption of the preceding governments."

Caldera does not deny that his 1993 victory was seen as challenging the neo-liberal economic policy initiated in 1989 by the former president, Carlos Andres Perez, and orchestrated by the International Monetary Fund. During his election campaign, Caldera claimed that he wanted to sign a "letter of intent" with the Venezuelan people — a clear reference to the fact that he was distancing himself from the IMF.

However, the government has recently entered into negotiations with the IMF for a $7 billion loan in return for imposing an austerity package that involves devaluing the bolivar, lifting exchange controls, pruning inflation (running at about 70 per cent in 1995), slashing the large budget deficit (about 8 per cent of the GDP) and reactivating privatisation.

"I've never said we wouldn't negotiate with international bodies," says the president. "I hope we're moving towards an agreement with the IMF, but nothing is ever certain. They're a team of able technicians, but I feel their vision is much too monetarist, and hence limited. This is not true of the Inter-American Development Bank."

Caldera patently does not want to speed up the process. He is advocating a phased-in agreement, to allow him to get to grips with a crisis that many sectors of society — and the IMF itself — believe calls for "swift decisions". As a champion of the struggle against corruption, the president — who will be 80 in February — continues to be spared criticism on the street, but doubts have been spreading.

MANY BANKING executives involved in the 1993 crisis have skipped to Miami with their ill-gotten gains, and the state has repaid some $7 billion to repair the damage. People are bitter but also bewildered and worried. Long queues form outside any bank which is suspected of being in difficulty, as people try to withdraw their savings.

The austerity awaiting Venezuelans next year will mean recession, unemployment, and a higher cost of living, forecasts Roosevelt Velásquez, a member of the IMF negotiating team in Caracas. He feels, however, that the "devaluation shouldn't be too drastic". The introduction at the end of October of a preferential exchange rate for foreign tourists and non-residents foreshadows an inevitable devaluation.

The government recently scored a minor victory when it succeeded in raising the price of petrol at the pump without setting off social unrest. The price of regular (two-star) petrol — untouchable in a country that has long seen itself as the Saudi Arabia of Latin America — was left undisturbed. An attempt to raise petrol prices in February 1989 exploded into riots that are reported to have left 1,000 people dead.

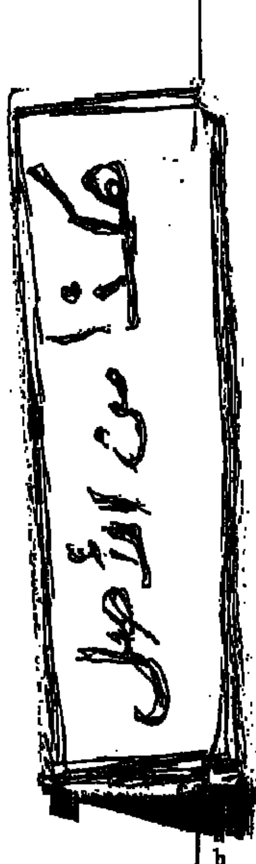
"I believe people are now more ready to accept a few sacrifices," says the president. But socially, Venezuela is on the edge of a volcano that could erupt at any moment. Unemployment is officially 25 per cent, and the black market is continuing to expand. According to Unicef, 71 per cent of Venezuelans live in conditions of poverty. As a result, insecurity has increased, particularly in the capital where some 50 violent deaths are reported each week.

"After the agreement with the IMF, the privatisation plan could bring us $6 billion in two years," says Carlos Bernardez, head of an investment fund.

Electricity, what's left of the telephone system, and the Guiana Corporation are in line for privatisation. As for petroleum, which has brought in some $300 billion over 20 years, the head of the state oil company is confident of its future. For the first time since oil was nationalised in 1975, foreign investors have direct access to the country's oil reserves.

Here again, President Caldera qualifies his position on the subject. "I don't reject privatisation," he says. "If it's useful, we'll open the door for foreign capital to enter the oil industry, but the state must basically remain in control. For us oil is not just another commercial product."

(December 3/4)





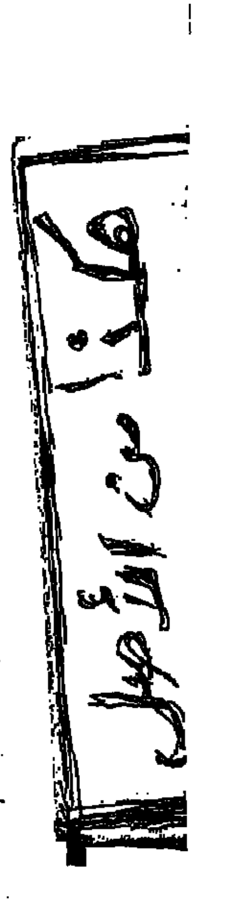
CLASSIFIED

CAR HIRE

DEATHS

BRUETON, Mary, (nee Lucas) died in Cardiff on November 28th 1995 aged 80. Teacher, tutor, psychiatric social worker, researcher, inspirer, seeker for justice and freedom, organiser, questioner. Loved wife of Ray; Mother of Theo; grandmother of Rebecca and Camilla; comrade, colleague, and friend to a multitude.

LONDON HOTELS & APARTMENTS



She who must not be obeyed

Women who want it all pay for it in exhaustion. **Suzanne Moore** reflects on a feminist dilemma for careerists

They just can't Delegate, can They..

I *HAVE* always detested the ads for She magazine — "She is for the woman who juggles her life" — which depict some model as the perfect mother, careerwoman and lover. If women are so adept at juggling so many balls, why don't they lob a few where it matters? An advert is, of course, a fantasy, an aspiration that most of us never achieve. Yet, somehow, the image of the woman who wants to "have it all" is discussed in the media as if it were a reality. In journalistic shorthand, Ms Have It All's caring, sharing partner is the equally fictitious New Man. Together this wonderful couple would smooth over the cracks in the problematic relationships between men, women, children and work and take us hand-in-hand into the future.

Now that Linda Kelsey, the editor of She magazine, has resigned due to stress, the cracks are being brought into focus once more. I take it for granted that it's possible that occasionally some men resign from high-powered jobs too, but that this does not usually precipitate a discussion of whether it is feasible for men to combine a career with being a father and a husband. Poor Kelsey now has to cope with the added stress of being representative of a whole generation of women, rather than just being someone who has recognised that they need a break.

If she can't hack it, the gloating implication is that neither can the rest of us. It serves women right for wanting it all in the first place. Having it all might mean, in essence, simply wanting what men have; but we have known for a long time that if we want what men have, we need what men have got — and that is a wife. Without such support we have, as Erica Jong once said, simply fought for the right to be terminally exhausted.

Yet the discussion about Kelsey and her ilk also takes place in some media stratosphere where all jobs are careers, where all work consists of a series of meetings and lunches, where people do have more than enough money to live on, but still want something else. Most women with children do actually work. They work part-time, which hampers much chance of a career, and they do underpaid, unstimulating jobs — not to have it all, but simply to have enough.

Likewise, the stress they suffer is not to do with the circulation of a magazine they edit, but to do with wondering how they can afford to get the washing machine fixed and buy all the presents their children are demanding at Christmas. They might worry about whether they are spending enough quality tine with their partners and children, but there is the shopping to do, the meal to cook, the floor to vacuum. It may come as a surprise to some journalists but teachers, nurses and shop assistants have children too. And they manage. Just about.

Why I am so grumpy about She magazine is that in the guise of supporting women, it implicitly supplies a whole new set of pressures. Women are already too hard on themselves and each other; we spend our lives keeping up appearances. A nineties magazine for women would forget the spinach flan and understated camel suit. It would tell its readers to live in a tip, only have sex if there was nothing on the telly, throw up at parties, to dress in a bin-liner if they so desired, phone in sick and yell at the children. It would say that mess is fine, it is healthy, it is life, that feeling out of control and veering from one crisis to the next is perfectly normal. It would say: "Let it go" and it would of course have to let all its lucrative glossy advertising go, too.

However, women's magazines are still imbued with what feels like an increasingly eighties ethos, in which the answer to every problem is either work or consumption. If anything marks out the difference between the decades, it is this changing attitude to work. It has been forced upon us. And it has been forced upon men, too, who can no longer assume a smooth progression through one career. Many men are now having to find an identity outside work, in the way that women have always had to. All of this is being done in a vacuum. The old infrastructures of extended family have gone and nothing has yet replaced them. The government is perfectly happy to drive down wages for part-time work and to deny paternity leave for fathers. Child care is expensive. Job-sharing is still looked on as a rather peculiar practice. Work and family are still constructed as separate spheres and never the twain shall meet. No wonder the stress of holding it altogether is high.

Add to this a generation of women who are having their babies later and it all becomes too much. The impact of women becoming mothers in their thirties rather than their twenties is not much taken into account, but it should be. These are women who have more to give up and are therefore more resentful. They know that having a child changes your life but they never realised quite what the extent of that change would be. Does anyone?

This has caused us to question what exactly those words that are thrown around all the time, words like "equality" or "equal opportunity" actually mean. Equality means working 14 hours a day. Equality, it turns out, means the double-shift in which some are clearly more equal than others. We talk of children as a choice, as an option, but once they are here there is less choice and fewer options for women.

O*PTIONS* is, by the way, another women's magazine in which your options involve one kind of make-up or another. I don't think any legislation can change the fundamental fact that women have babies and men don't. Nor do most feminists, contrary to popular belief, but it could certainly be made easier. Working practices, as we have seen, can change overnight if the desire for change is there.

But as long as women excel at juggling and doing it all, change is unlikely. We are victims of own ability, if you like, and arguing for equality in the workplace has resulted in us having to pretend that we can function on men's terms, that we are not in fact the primary care-givers in our families, and that work is the be-all and end-all of our existence.

It is no shock that the talk now is less of equality — why should we even want to be equal to miserable men who have no other life? — but of quality itself. Women want quality time not just with their husbands or with their children, but selfishly enough occasionally for themselves. Just like men. The eighties obsession with quantity has been replaced by a concern with the quality of life and this is a debate in which both sexes have a stake. What is the point of having it all if you still feel something is missing? Perhaps it is better to have part of it at different times in your life and enjoy what you have. But as long as men can function in the current system then it will carry on; let's not fool ourselves that they have much investment in arguing for female equality. Yet if they see that they, too, are malfunctioning and can promote a better balance between work and family and the quality of life, some version of equality may slip in through the back door. This is a difficult thing to suggest to an already cowed workforce, but without it none of us, I'm afraid, can truly claim to have it all.

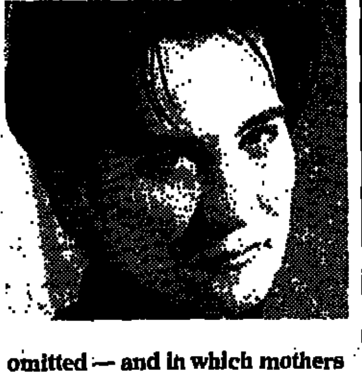
Mum's the word in Canadian Who's Who

Clare Trevena on why kd lang (right) has not made a list of famous Canadian women

I*T IS* somewhat comforting when an authoritative tome, bound in red and embossed with gold, has a preface dedicated to Mothers. After all, mothers need respect: they are the ones who sent you to the library when you were young, to look up famous people in volumes like this.

The Who's Who Of Canadian Women acknowledges the important work of mothers and regrets that in its 3,000 entries, it could not list all the nation's deserving moms.

Reference books do not usually have such an overtly sentimental start. But this is no ordinary reference book. It is a Who's Who for the caring, politically correct Canada of the nineties; a book in which a nurse gets a listing while a mayor is



omitted — and in which mothers are always in the background.

Canadians have long suffered anonymity, the assumption being that if a person is famous, he or she is American. Now that anonymity seems to have reached into the 1,100 pages of the women's Who's Who. Not that the editors assume a range of their compatriots are American: they have just not included them. Which makes for bizarre reading.

Singers kd lang, Joni Mitchell and Anne Murray are missing, as are author Alice Munro and actress Margot Kidder. Margaret Atwood has made it, but Barbara Hall, the mayor of Toronto, hasn't. Nor have Sunera Thobani, head of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and Florence Bird, the woman who headed the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, which led to much of Canada's equality legislation.

"I really don't think it can be taken as reputable if it doesn't include so many people," Thobani says. "It seems the women doing the most for other women have not made it."

The lobbyists are not alone in their frustration. Celebrities have also sucked on sour grapes. Silken Laumann, Olympic rower, did not receive a mention.

The La do, however, hold Arlene Lehmann, an Arabian horse breeder, and Joanne Ladner, a nursing unit manager. Author Alice Munro might have written about the women whose names would have preceded and succeeded her, had she been included. There is Constance Mungall, a freelance writer, and June Munro, a retired librarian.

"It would not have been beyond the wit of man to come up with a biographical sketch of Alice," says Munro's editor, Doug Gibson. "It is contained on the cover of every one of her hard-back books."

The problem, Gibson says, is that Munro does not like to fill out forms and one of the ways in which the compilers of the Canadian Women's Who's Who got their information was by sending questionnaires to women who wouldbe and wannabe listed. And filling out such forms is not Munro's style; nor is it kd lang's or Anne Murray's.

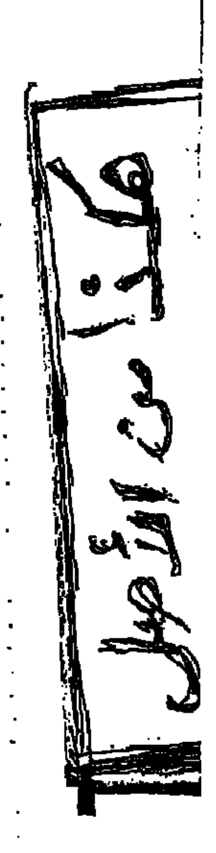
"When a career spans 25 years, there's really no way to put it all on the form, is there?" says Marlene Palmer, Murray's agent. "But Canadians know who she is, whether or not she's in a book."

The editors sounded besieged and harassed. They spent 18 months updating an eight-year-old book — and all people picked up on were those names not included. "We have 3,000 very interesting women in this book," insists editor Kim Kofmel. "They may not be high profile; that is what is interesting. We made attempts to contact everyone directly, but we did not feel good about going ahead with old information. And there is only so much we can do, with 6,000 names submitted."

The editors sent out forms to people they thought of including and wrote to corporations for nominations.

Another Who's Who will be out in 15 more months: an expanded version, with up to 5,000 names. The editors give assurances that now their files are active, there will be less chance of omitting or offending. And while the compilers' methodology has meant film stars, media moguls and musicians are ignored, the gentle reader is introduced to Marnie Paikin, a volunteer in Hamilton, Ontario and Mary Vinish, a volunteer in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan.

Both are mothers.



Canada's comic chronicler

OBITUARY
Robertson Davies

THE NOVELIST Robertson Davies, who has died aged 82, will be remembered as one of the finest of his generation, but he was far more than just this: he was a Canadian renaissance man who excelled as an essayist, dramatist and academic as well as a writer of some of the most entertaining comic fictions of our century.

With his death, Canada has lost a personality who seemed to have stepped out of another era. To some he was the epitome of the novelist as performer, a Dickens or Mark Twain; to others he was a Moses-like patriarch whose venerable white hair and beard perfectly matched his pontifical manner. His eclectic interests, which included myth, alchemy and farce, and earned him the reputation of being a polymath, frequently took him back into earlier centuries. He pursued them with a largeness of vision characteristic of the artistic views of his mentor Jung, with whom he identified as someone born into a "country" environment.

Davies was born in Thamesville, Ontario and educated at Upper Canada College, Queen's University (in Kingston, Ontario) and Balliol College, Oxford. He had an interest in drama from an early age, and wrote his Oxford thesis on Shakespeare's boy actors. After leaving Oxford, he remained in England working as an actor outside London and, during 1940, played minor roles at the Old Vic in the era of Tyrone Guthrie. That same year he married his wife Brenda Matthews, whom he had previously met at Oxford and who was then working as a stage manager at the Old Vic.

The coming of the war brought a return to Canada, where he worked in the family business, journalism. Davies's father was the proprietor of a small-town newspaper, the Peterborough Examiner, and Robertson became its editor for the next 15 years.

Under him the Examiner became one of the most quoted newspapers in Canada. Much of this success was due to his own regular column, written under the pseudonym of Samuel Marchbanks, which provided a stamping-ground for developing his fictional talents. Davies's Marchbanks persona was an irascible and opinionated social commentator. While he insisted that he was not Samuel Marchbanks, Davies found in the character an alter ego who allowed him to indulge the more waspish side of his nature.

The Marchbanks pieces later appeared in three books: The Diary Of Samuel Marchbanks (1947), The Table Talk Of Samuel Marchbanks (1949) and Marchbanks' Almanack (1967).

The Marchbanks writing apart, Davies's major contributions to Canadian literature during the forties and fifties was as a dramatist. He had 15 plays performed, among them, A Jig For The Gypsy and Hunting Stuart. Then, in 1960, he entered academic life and for the next two decades taught literature courses at Trinity College, Toronto. In 1963, he was appointed Master of Massey College, Toronto's new graduate college, a position which he was to occupy for two decades.

Robertson Davies: epitome of the novelist as performer

It was, however, as a novelist that Davies achieved his international reputation. He published three novel-sequences, beginning with The Salterton Trilogy — Tempest-Tost (1951), Leaven Of Malice (1954) and A Mixture Of Frailties (1958). In 1970 his career as a novelist took off with the international acclaim accorded to Fifth Business, the first volume of his second trilogy, The Deptford Trilogy.

Fifth Business is a classic study of small-town Canadian life and the struggle to liberate oneself from a nonconformist upbringing. Davies has described the narrator of this novel, Dunstan Ramsey, as a "grey schoolmaster burning like an oil gusher inside", and the book charts the process by which he liberates himself from what he perceives as the mean-spiritedness of his community through encounters with magic, myth and hagiography.

THE TWO other parts of The Deptford Trilogy — The Manticore (1972) and World Of Wonders (1975) — extend the range of subjects on which Davies's polymathic imagination draws, encompassing his life-long interest in Jungian psychology and the "world of wonders" of carnival performance. The Rebel Angels (1981), the Booker short-listed What's Bred In The Bone (1985) and The Lyre Of Orpheus (1988) made up the third three-decker set, The Cornish Trilogy.

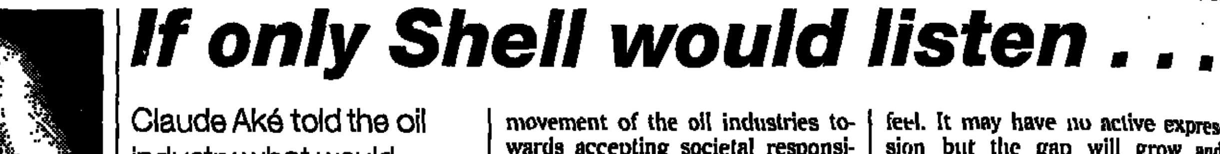
Increasingly Davies's imagination seemed to have been gripped by the expansive need to explore the multiple possible ramifications of his themes, a Victorian trait which again makes him an engaging anachronism in our own *fin-de-siècle* world, even if the loose and baggy monster has enjoyed something of a revival in the hands of writers like Salman Rushdie and Timothy Mo.

Earlier this year, Davies was in Britain launching his novel The Cunning Man, and fitting in theatre-going in his spare moments. Consequently, it comes as a particular shock to realise that his venerable presence will be with us no more.

He described Judith Grant's monumental 700-page biography of him as "an excellent life of somebody else", and one is left feeling that behind the public persona was a private man who eluded his biographers, that behind the dramatic facade of venerable patriarch existed a "cunning man" concealing private sensitivities.

John Thieme

(William) Robertson Davies, novelist, essayist and dramatist, born August 26, 1913; died December 2, 1995



If only Shell would listen . . .

Claude Aké told the oil industry what would happen if it didn't enter into a dialogue in Nigeria. **John Vidal** reports

OUTSIDE the Shell Centre at London's South Bank, Anita Roddick (Body Shop), Charles Secrett (Friends of the Earth), Owens Wiwa (Ken's brother) and assorted Greenpeaceniks are encouraging Shell staff to search their consciences before going to work. Desmond Tutu is flying in from New York to lend weight to boycott calls. Up the road in Clerkenwell, Professor Claude Aké is shaking his head over a cup of Guardian tea.

"This Shell thing . . ." The professor pauses. He is the only man known to have taken a Shell shilling, searched his conscience and resigned over the Saro-Wiwa affair. "It's so . . . simple", he says. "It's about taking people seriously. About being understood and relating to people."

Aké was the Nigerian oil industry's trump card before the death sentences were passed on Saro-Wiwa and the other Ogoni last month. A professor of politics at London and Columbia universities, and director of Nigeria's Centre for Advanced Social Studies, he is a laureate of the Nigerian National Order of Merit, the country's most coveted honour.

When he accepted the invitation to direct the steering committee of the Niger Delta Environmental Survey (NDES) — an independent, international investigation, which would take evidence for up to two years — he lent Shell and the Nigerian oil industry academic credibility and international authority.

"To accept was a leap of faith," he says. "If past experience was any guide, there was no reason to assume that the petroleum industry in Nigeria was the least concerned about the plight [of the communities]. I allowed for the possibility that the industry might have finally recognised the need to reconcile the profit motive with social responsibility".

For a while, Aké's — indeed Shell's — hopes were high. Aké persuaded Shell to broaden the survey to include social affairs. It was not enough, he says, to have an inventory of pollution. "When they came to me, they said it was a genuine attempt to define the problems. I took it in faith that this was true. There had been a lot of emotion. I thought, 'Let's try rigorously to determine the problems'. I took the survey as a movement of the oil industries towards accepting societal responsibilities and acknowledging the anxieties of people."

Aké says he warned Shell "over and again" about what would happen if nothing was done in the delta region. "I have had so many meetings with Shell urging dialogue, anticipating these problems, encouraging dialogue between Shell, the government and communities", he says. "It was clear that the NDES did not have the enthusiastic support of the industry. There was nothing in the posture and practices of Shell, NAOC, Elf and Mobil to signal that NDES was a forward movement."

Yet, says Aké, progress of a sort was being made. A late October "stakeholders' meeting" bringing together everyone affected by the industry in the delta, with more than 400 people present, was successful. Ten powerful groups, including Ken Saro-Wiwa's Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni Peoples (Mosop), suspended their initial doubts and presented a common position paper.

But then, as Aké says, "realities intruded". The death sentences were passed, the judicial murders carried out. It was a tragedy on very many levels, not least, says Aké, because Shell and the oil industry were panicked into a siege mentality. "They were, in effect, assuring everyone that nothing had changed [with the deaths] and that nothing would change. Even silence would have been better than such unfeeling belligerence."

Aké found the oil companies' position inexplicable. "I was taken back by their unwillingness to accept responsibility. Was this positive or realistic? It gave the wrong message. We were expecting a conciliatory position, something that might have said, 'Let's talk and see how we can react purposefully to this tragedy'."

Instead, he finds the oil companies blaming the communities for sabotage of their installations. It is puzzling. "There may have some sabotage, but then why did they set up the Niger delta survey in the first place? Blaming the communities doesn't help to improve relations."

Aké's family comes from the delta. He knows how the oil companies treat people: his mother has been trying for four years to get compensation from Agip over fishing rights. He knows the tensions and the problems in the communities. "The relationship between the companies and the communities is bad," he says. "Clearly, there is alienation. If this is not met constructively, it will simmer and reinforce the helplessness that people feel. It may have no active expression but the gap will grow and explode."

The relationship between the companies and people, he says, has been one-sided. The companies have been insensitive and arrogant and their practices have fuelled resentment. It is not, he suggests, in the big things that the companies have alienated people, but in small ones. "They decide, for instance, what compensation to give. There's no redress. They take their time. The compensation can be miserable when it comes. People have a sense of powerlessness. Rightly or wrongly, the oil companies are seen as a potential opportunity that has turned into problems."

It's the corporate culture of the oil companies that Aké finds baffling. Apart from anything, treating people badly and acting arrogantly makes neither human nor financial sense in Africa, he says. "Dialogue is so important in Africa. An exchange of views is important; you cannot give without visiting. The companies presuppose hostility with the community.

"Frankly, I would have expected a much more sophisticated corporate strategy from Shell. No one is calling for altruism, just a certain pragmatism. It needn't have cost Shell anything; all this could have been avoided for no money whatever. Even now it need cost Shell very little or nothing to sort out."

SO WHAT must Shell do? "If I were advising Shell, I'd say they'd have to change. It's futile to spend all that cash fighting to defend the indefensible. Civilisation moves along. They should be positive. It will not be expensive.

"The companies complain that their hands are tied and that they are constricted by relations with government. That's not correct. The government does not prevent them from treating people better. They could easily make available to nearby villages the facilities they have for their workers — electricity could be extended.

"Their arrogance is terrible. It's very, very difficult to have a hearing with the companies. Claims against them take for ever. They could accept the principle of having an independent body to determine minor claims. These things would not cost a thing. Minor matters . . . can take three years. This could be easily dealt with.

"Shell's problem is so simple. I don't know whether it's the power or the consciousness that has made them as they are. It's a culture problem. Sometimes the gap seems unbridgeable."

50 miles
NIGERIA
River Niger
Ogoniland
Port Harcourt
Oloibiri
Bight of Bonny

Paved with good intentions

A *SMALL*, rectangular sign on the dirt track into Oloibiri is the sole monument to the crucible of modern Nigeria, *writes Chris McGreal*. "This is Oloibiri, the goose that lays the golden egg. You are welcome," it says.

This is the place where oil was first struck in the Niger delta nearly 40 years ago. The well that earned Oloibiri its place in history has long since dried up, and the oil industry's web has spread across the delta. But Oloibiri's 8,000 residents still cling to promises — long forgotten beyond the town's borders — of roads, sea walls and cash in every pocket.

When oil was first struck in Nigeria in 1956, Edwin Ofonih was a nine-year-old boy watching his father work as head labourer for a Shell contractor.

"We thought that when oil was found we would be millionaires. We are still depressed," he said. "Shell brought civilisation to Nigeria. I don't see why they can't bring civilisation to us. Shell promised to build schools and to make a sea wall because the town is flooded every year. Nothing was done."

Oyster farmers' final harvest

F*OR* 16 years Joe Folder and his wife, June, have farmed oysters on the River Carew in the Cleddau Estuary in Pembrokeshire. This year will be their last, *writes Geoffrey Gibbs*.

Hit by recession and grant-aided overseas competition, the Folders have decided to sell their remaining stock once the Christmas season is over, and close what is the last oyster farm in Wales.

The family started by buying a derelict 22-acre smallholding as a nursery for breeding native oysters. Tidal quarries on the smallholding — now a wildlife reserve — were used to part-grow oysters for sale to farms in France and Germany.

The experiment with the native variety was not a success, so the Folders turned to Pacific oysters grown in plastic mesh bags laid out on timber trestles in the river. Like all farming, it is hard and dirty work.

In a good year the Folders will sell up to 1 million oysters. More usually the tally is nearer 750,000 and their income has seldom done more than pay for reinvestment.

This year has seen Carew's worst start to the season in 10 years. Recession has continued to hit the company's lively mail order business, while subsidised competition from Ireland has enabled German customers to force down prices of the 250,000 part-grown oysters the company supplies each year. After failing to find a buyer or tenant farmer to take on the business, Mr Folder and his wife have had enough.

One employee has already left and the closure decision means two others — including the Folders' 26-year-old son, Craig — will be looking for work.

The Folders themselves will be able to fall back on the income from an established naturist camp site on their land.

"I shall be glad not to be driven by the tide tables," says Mr Folder. "Being able to sit down and think 'what shall I do today?' will be quite a relaxation."

PHOTOGRAPH: JEFF MORGAN

Letter from Paris Roger Walker

Strike solidarité

IN PARIS on strike days you walk as though you were driving, looking over your shoulder before changing lanes. People everywhere, all in a hurry, share the pavements with cyclists and roller skaters. At one point the other day, the maelstrom organised itself for a few hundred metres so that pedestrians going one way used the inside of the pavement and those going the other way the outside, while bikes and skates whizzed down the middle. It reminded me of the time I got caught up on the motorway in the crowd leaving the Le Mans 24-hour motorcycle race. Cars were on either side and motorbikes hurtled down the middle at 200 kph.

The majority of public transport workers are on strike to protect the special benefits they enjoy (notably, early retirement and health insurance) which are under threat from proposals recently put forward by the prime minister, Alain Juppé. The more thoughtful among them realise that they are also striking to preserve future jobs and the notion of public service. If Juppé gets his way now, public transport in France will deteriorate rapidly the way it has in England over the past 20 years. Till now, France has refused to accept the idea that railways have to make money. Public transport has been seen as a public service, a heavy but necessary investment which lubricates the rest of the economy.

I'd sooner put up with a few more weeks of strikes, than find myself with a rundown transport system when I retire in 20 years' time.

But it has been very difficult and extremely tiring. My boss pays for a taxi in the mornings to make sure I get into the office, but he expects me to "innovate" at the end of the day. (He uses that marvellously vague French verb *se débrouiller.*) But to get from Gagny, in the eastern suburbs, to La Défense in the west before the traffic jams start to build up you have to leave early — very early. I set off before six and I am in the office by seven. By mid-morning I know how many of the team will be there that day. I redistribute the workload (with lots of *se débrouiller*) and work flat out six in the evening. Then the fun starts.

On Tuesday there was still a 10 per cent service on the RER line A. I caught one of the last trains to leave La Défense. People were calm and good-humoured, making the best of a bad job. I heard a stage whisper: "I'm going to get all hell if I'm not home to take my pill on time!".

The festive atmosphere was added to by the presence of policemen accompanied by armed troops, a product of the bomb scares! When the train pulled into the station it was empty. Seconds later it was full. By the time it pulled out, the temperature was up to 30C.

When we reached the next station I soon realised that in fact we'd been far from full. Now each group of four seats was occupied by four, five or six people, with three or four more squeezed in between their knees. No one could move, the temperature soared and things stayed that way for the next hour and a half.

AT EACH STOP, it took 10-15 minutes for those who wanted to get off to struggle through those trying to get on. I saw one big chap, his briefcase held over his head, take a small woman in tow and heave her through the crowd till they both popped out the other side like peas from a pod. In each station firemen were busy treating those who had succumbed to the heat. With the doors finally closed, the driver came on the PA to say he wasn't going anywhere till "the additional passengers" got off the bumpers or "would that gentleman with his backside hanging out of the window please either get in or out". I wouldn't have missed it for anything!

Next day there were no trains at all, and that made everything easier. There was only one possibility — hitch. With collar and tie and smart leather briefcase, it works a treat. As soon as you put out your thumb someone stops. I've ridden with single young women in battered Renaults, two Portuguese plumbers in a van and one supercilious yuppie who was painfully doing his civic duty.

The one good thing to come out of this strike so far is the proof that *solidarité* is not a lost cause. When push comes to shove, we all shove in the same direction.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

D*OES* a novel or short story exist written in the second person?

ALTHOUGH rare compared to the more conventional forms, second-person narration is not difficult to do: just potentially tedious. One great recent example is Jay McInerney's novel, Bright Lights Big City. Peter Carey's short story, "Room No5", in The Fat Man In History, also brings it off, and Frank Moorhouse's Libido And Life Lessons is a partial example. But most narratologists would say that all narration is in the first person, whether the "I" is revealed explicitly or not. A famous example in support of this is Madame Bovary. There is a first-person pronoun at the beginning of the novel, apparently indicating a first-person narrator who is, however, never explicitly heard from again. — *David Matthews and Mark Gauntlett, London*

W*HY* does my stubble grow faster when I travel by plane?

MY HUSBAND noticed that his stubble grows faster when he has been out drinking with the boys. I called scientist Karl Kruszelnicki, who has a regular talk-back show on an Australian radio station. He said those out drinking are less likely to be taking in water, so their body is slowly dehydrating. The face "shrivels up like a prune" overnight due to dehydration, which makes the stubble stick out further. Travelling by plane is also a dehydrating experience. — *Rachel Allanson, Sydney, Australia*

W*HY WAS* the Black Prince so called? I read recently that he did not wear black armour. Could he have been a black man?

THE Black Prince or, as he was known in his day, Edward of Woodstock Prince of Wales, died before gaining the throne. His whole life seems to have been devoted to waging war, principally against the French, and with a fair amount of success. His nickname, the Black Prince, was said to be inspired by the "black" terror created by the ferocity of his fighting. There is nothing to suggest he had particularly tanned skin as, say, Charles II was reputed to have. — *Lindsay Mildenhall, Melbourne, Australia*

EDWARD I is known as the Black Prince because of the black armour that he wore at the Battle of Crécy. — *Shawn Rabin, Houston, Texas, USA*

C*OULD* a young deciduous sapling grown in Europe adapt to the "opposite" seasons if it were transplanted in, say, Australia?

THE problem for a sapling removed to the opposite hemisphere would not be the seasons but the passage of the sun. In the southern hemisphere the sun passes in an anti-clockwise direction: in the northern, clockwise. This is why cut wood customarily twists in a certain direction, so the sapling transplanted will unravel. — *David Kisler, Auckland, New Zealand*

T*HE WORD* "cleave" has two opposite meanings — either to stick together or to split apart. Are there any other words that do the same thing?

IN CANADIAN military parlance, the verb "to secure" has three meanings. If you tell the Army to secure a building, they'll surround it, kick in the doors and clear it room by room. Tell the Navy to do the same thing and they'll lock all the doors and go home. The Air Force, however, would secure a building by taking out a three-year lease with an option to buy. — *Dominic Rossi, Halifax, Canada*

Any answers?

T*HE* word "tragedy" originates from the Greek words tragos (goat) + oide (song). How did the modern meaning evolve? — *Andrew Green, Barking, Essex*

H*OW* long after the American Revolution and the War of 1812 did it take for Britain and the United States to become friends again? — *John Slater, Harrogate*

I *NEED* an alarm-clock device that will wake me up without waking up my partner. Can anyone suggest anything? — *Des O'Fingle, Barnsbury, London*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ.

A Country Diary

Veronica Heath

NORTHUMBERLAND: Those of us who live a stone's throw from Hadrians Wall have sometimes been accused of being indifferent to its powerful influence, its amazing structure, 73 miles across the neck of England. Actually, we feel both proud of the wall and protective of it. One of the treasures of our wall is that you can actually walk on it. Not surprising, therefore, that parts of it are falling down and having to be repaired.

Trouble is that as a chunk of history, the wall is unique and I quite understand that some of those with a stake in it (there are nearly 100 organisations and individuals concerned) now want to increase its accessibility to the public. The general idea is to double the number of visitors, 2 million a year already, spreading the load across less well-known sites. Some of the landowners who used to wish the tourists would stop walking past their dining room windows and leave them in peace, now welcome them, for the good of the local economy.

On a drizzly day I went up to a favourite stretch of the wall and had an hour of untrammelled walking. There is a marvellous feeling of empathy with the Romans but above all it is a walk on the wild side. I saw no visitors and met only a farmer exercising one of the horses he trains for National Hunt racing. "Marvellous country for getting them fit," he said.

This is the time of year when the rams are running with the ewes. One belligerent tup climbed right up on the wall to look at us and took a shine to our dachsund, cornering her under a crag. She was capable of defending herself but I feared for the fellow's fine Roman nose if he persisted in butting her and I had to chase him off, back to his harem.

Aida in distress

OPERA
Tom Sutcliffe

THERE are some good voices in the Royal Opera's new Aida line-up. When Sharon Sweet in the title role leans back on her considerable frame, opens her throat and lets fly, she may resemble a Hoffnung cartoon of an operatic soprano, yet she sounds touchingly mellifluous and vulnerable.

Michael Sylvester's Radames rings truly heroic, burnished and golden through his range to the very top, if you close your eyes. Nina Terentieva's nicely nasty Amneris and Simon Estes as Aida's father Amonasro are both robustly determined and richly coloured.

The problem is not just that they all seem to be singing in different languages, and that Terentieva's vowels and most of her consonants sound Romanian rather than "the original Italian". The characters exist in isolated bubbles and their acting is rudimentary.

Daniele Gatti as conductor reacts to the emergency by whipping up the pace in the sometimes untidy orchestral accompaniment, but it's a case of the patient being on a ventilator. Gatti's musical perceptions and strategy don't have a chance.

Elijah Moshinsky, whose fairly dull Simon Boccanegra sparked into brilliant life for last summer's revival, has fiddled with the staging a bit, but somehow I've never imagined Aida taking place in a 1960s hotel furnished by Selfridges. Moshinsky tries to repeat the trick of his Attila, with screens in painted woodchip rising and falling and opening to either side. There's some feeble-mimed dancing with aboriginal masks. The addition of acrobats is a desperate last throw.

This aims to be a tasteful, economical Aida, nifty in its rituals. But a sober Aida is a contradiction in terms. The piece must be spectacular and energetic. It needs a director with the courage of his or her (possibly vulgar) convictions.



Sharon Sweet . . . a Hoffnungesque operatic soprano made vulnerable PHOTOGRAPH: HENRIETTA BUTLER

Rumble in the jungle

THEATRE
Michael Billington

TIM SUPPLE'S adaptation and production of The Jungle Book at London's Young Vic is everything you could want a children's Christmas show to be: faithful to Kipling's stories, visually imaginative and musically expressive, free of any hint of Disneyfied cuteness. It also brings out one of the key points of the stories: the social responsibility of the jungle law and its superiority to human crudeness.

Supple has picked three of the classic stories about Mowgli, the man-cub who joins the Seeonee Wolf Pack and staged them in an earth-filled pit with a suspended walkway overhead. In Melly Still's design, no attempt is made to use masks or tacky animal costumes: you simply believe the actors are wolves, bears, panthers or tigers by virtue of their expressive movements and floor-length maxi-coats.

Like Peter Brook, Supple works through visual suggestion rather than heavy-handed literalism: Andy Williams becomes Kaa, the rock python that rescues Mowgli from the monkey people, simply by virtue of the long-stemmed pole he carries before him and the way his tongue constantly explores his lips.

The stories are told directly and clearly but with much theatrical verve. The evening is much aided by Adrian Lee's music, with thunderous percussion from Joji Hirota, and by versatile acting from the eight-strong cast, including Ronny Jhutti, lithe and loin-clothed as Mowgli.





Clive Mendus as Shere Khan

Kipling, it seems, survives in the modern age both because Mowgli appeals to some childhood urge to escape from parents into the animal world and because that kingdom contains its own instinctive laws and even its own council.

Supple's production highlights both points. The animal world, with its hunting, its adventures, its comradeship, its anarchy, including wild chases through the auditorium, seems much more fun than the human world to which Mowgli briefly returns. At the same time, the animals have a natural sense of justice that appeals to children.

But this is much more than a children's show. Supple's production caught the imagination of a house ranging from babes in arms to uniformed schoolchildren. But it also reveals an intensity of response to Kipling that should have adults also beating a path to the Young Vic.

Heady affairs of state

CINEMA
Derek Malcolm

JUDGING BY the Nixon tapes and other tall but well-documented stories about recent American presidents, Rob Reiner is on a hiding to nothing trying to make a film about sex, love and dating in the White House. If he *tells* the unadorned truth, it probably couldn't be screened. If he tries for pure fiction — a nice Frank Capra fairy tale, for instance — we simply wouldn't believe it any more.

Reiner goes for the middle ground in **The American President**. He presents Michael Douglas as a nice, vaguely Clintonesque Democratic president, the sort James Stewart or Henry Fonda would have once played — a widower struggling against the constraints of office to find a real relationship.

Annette Bening is a pugnacious but pretty environmental lobbyist who argues with him about a bill that would be difficult to get through Congress but which accords with his deeper principles. His advisers tell him to forget it, except for Michael J Fox's idealistic domestic policy aide. But he can't forget her and has the FBI find out her number. When he rings, she thinks he's a joker and slams the phone down.

From then on, the romance develops in the full glare of the press, with approval ratings vital in an election year and a nasty little Republican 'candidate' (Richard Dreyfuss) on his tail, hoping to trip him up.

The film is clever enough to make you think about what might happen in reality, but not quite good enough to convince that it would go the way Reiner pushes it. For instance, would a president really invite a first date to a state dinner with his French equivalent? And, if he did, would he dance with her cheek to cheek?

What goes on within the confines of the White House is given a more realistic, researched tone, with Martin Sheen a credible chief of staff (unsurprising, since he has played both John and Robert Kennedy in his day), Anna Deavere Smith as an equally believable press secretary and, more surprisingly, Samantha Mathis as a personal aide who has her work cut out heading off storms.

The American President does manage a feeling of truthfulness, though it doesn't so much attempt to put an ordinary man into extraordinary circumstances as an extraordinary man into the kind of fix an ordinary man might face. How, Reiner asks, can life even attempt normality with the media watching every move?

Douglas, fresh from a series of finely graded but overwrought parts, manages the pomp and ceremony of the president's public face pretty well and the vulnerability of the private man with some aplomb too. The problem is that Reiner falls prey to the old fantasy that the office makes the man, which hardly equates with the personalities of recent occupants of the Oval Office.

Bening provides an attractively feisty performance that's among the best things she has done. Only when you think of what Tracy and Hepburn might have achieved by way of charm does the pairing seem insufficient. But it's clearly as good as a slightly uneven, essentially rather cautious film deserves.

The American President looks as if it wants to have its cake and eat it. There's not the slightest hint of the racy irreverence of Reiner's This Is Spinal Tap, nor much of the wicked irony of his Misery. This is more like When Harry Truman Met Sally — a little pat, but equipped with a nicely intriguing premise.

Victoriana in the cinema is generally unchallenging to watch. But **Angels and Insects**, an adaptation of A S Byatt's novella Morpho Eugenia by Belinda and Philip Haas, is sterner stuff. It is a worm-in-the-bud examination of the caste system of the time, which focuses on the unsuitable marriage between a working-class naturalist and the daughter of his aristocratic patron.

The woman has a whole brood of children who do not look like their father, and it is discovered that the wife's brother has, in between laying the pretty maids, been committing incest with his sister since childhood. It is, Byatt and Haas suggest, all in accord with the merciless world of nature which our hero is so busy studying that he can't see what's happening until too late.

Haas, the American director who made the original — and equally enclosed — The Music Of Chance in his home country, seems determined with this film to trump some British period pieces with a style and atmosphere of his own. Or at least to translate Byatt in such a way as to make us forget about James Ivory and his colleagues.

HIS FILM looks beautiful in a slightly static way, doughtily attempts to recreate the more formal language of the time, and invests in a beautiful score from Alexander Balanescu that seems to float round and round the film as a kind of commentary of its own.

The performances are excellent. Mark Rylance is all the better for not making the naturalist into a Lawrentian class poacher, Patsy Kensit is for once given something coherent to do as the incestuous sister, and Kristin Scott-Thomas, Jeremy Kemp and Douglas Henshall are very good in subsidiary roles.

But while this is undoubtedly an intriguing and literate film, I do wonder what the cinema-going public will make of its stately pace and formal structuring. There is an element of self-consciousness about Angels And Insects which could be its undoing.

Diane Keaton's first feature as director, **Unstrung Heroes**, is set in the early sixties. It has the excellent Nathan Watt as a boy whose mother (Andie MacDowell) is ailing and who is sent away for the summer to stay with his eccentric uncles (Michael Richards and Maury Chaykin). Soon the boy embraces communism and refuses to pledge himself to a system that "fried the Rosenbergs". In short, he's released from the constraints of Middle American family life.

Keaton's film is comedic in tone, and its style confident and inventive. Richard LaGravenese's script also helps a lot.

The Brothers McMullen live in blue-collar Long Island. Mother has gone home to Ireland to live and all three are left to their own devices and end up sharing a house. They have their troubles but Edward Burns's film, which won the Jury Prize at Sundance last year, isn't about drugs, the dystopia of urban life or anything more than slightly perilous personal relationships.

It's the kind of film that reaches the mainstream from the independent sector but from the opposite corner to Tarantino and co — a romantic comedy which relies a good deal more on talk than action.

Burns, the writer-director, plays an aspiring scriptwriter who wants to move to Manhattan where, he believes, proper artists live. He is smitten by a model (Maxine Bahns) but doesn't want a long-term relationship. Jack Mulcahy is the married one, who loves his wife (Connie Britton) but fancies another woman (Elizabeth McKay) and starts a guilty affair.

The film is nicely-acted, observantly written and directed with a patient skill which scarcely betrays the fact that it was made with virtually no money during an interrupted eight-month schedule. And if it lacks real bite, it has very little false drama either. The ending is unconvincing but otherwise this is a pleasant corrective to films which sacrifice character for action that speaks much louder than words.

The Jain attraction

Ascetic but gorgeous . . . a 19th century picture of Yaksha Purnabhadran on show at the V&A's exhibition of Jain art

ART
Madeleine Bunting

ON ARRIVAL at London's Victoria and Albert Museum to see The Peaceful Liberators: Jain Art From India (until February 18), you are confronted by the first of many paradoxes — a floor painting in hundreds of shades of loose powder according to a method known as *rangoli* which is as ephemeral as pavement art and a metaphor for the transitory nature of the world according to Jainism.

The slightest breeze or insect can dislodge the fine particles and ruin the image. Opposite is a five-foot marble model of a £1 million temple which Britain's Jain community is planning to build in Potter's Bar, just north of London. The temple's scale indicates the community's ambition and its solidity suggests the permanence which Jain temples in India, centuries old, have achieved.

Jain art itself seems something of a paradox. Jainism is more uncompromising and harsh in its strictures to followers than Hinduism or Buddhism. It teaches non-attachment to material possessions to the point that the monks of the Digambara branch are not even allowed to wear clothes, yet it has spawned a magnificently opulent artistic heritage, illustrated here in the biggest international exhibition of Jain art yet mounted.

The virtue of the rangoli and the model is to underline the current religious significance of these artefacts for 10 million Jains across the world. For believers, this is not an art exhibition. These holy images were created for a religious purpose, and many of them have contributed to the cost of the exhibition as a way of communicating the truths of one of the world's oldest religions. The aesthetics are a means to further spiritual understanding, not an end in themselves. Jainism is the least-known of India's religions, partly because of its refusal to proselytise and partly because of its rigorous asceticism. The most important vow is *ahimsa* — non-violence towards all living beings.

This can be carried to elaborate lengths — some monks even wear face-masks to prevent themselves breathing in microscopic life.

The image which dominates the exhibition in dozens of stone carvings and bronzes is the Jina. Jains believe there have been 24 Jinas and the last one lived in the sixth century BC. The Jinas are not gods. They have attained liberation through enlightenment at death; the soul is emancipated from the cycle of birth and death and is in a pure state of omniscient knowledge and infinite bliss. How can this state of being be carved? This is the paradox central to the exhibition: centuries of artistic tradition were intent on depicting what was beyond the imagination and consciousness of the unenlightened.

The Jina image is immediately accessible even to the unpractised western eye. Strikingly simple and immobile, they are in sharp contrast to the multi-limbed vibrant figures of Hindu gods. They sit in the lotus position, or stand with arms hanging separate from the torso. The body is the idealised physique of a young male with a narrowed chest and broad shoulders, representing in physical form spiritual perfection and balance. They communicate power. One carving stands out as an extraordinarily rare image in religious art, East or West: a female meditating, 18 inches high. One branch of Jainism claims this is the 19th Jina who was a female, the other branch vehemently disagrees, claiming women are incapable of attaining enlightenment. What makes it so striking is that here is an image of femininity which is not defined by her fecundity or voluptuousness, but by her spirituality.

More dirt at Cromwell Street

TELEVISION
Stuart Jeffries

STEPHEN and Mae West have a book coming out, so 50 minutes of their reminiscences could do nothing but help them promote it. It's difficult not to be cynical about **Inside Story Special: Inside 25 Cromwell Street** (BBC1). True, the BBC only paid the brother and sister "paltry" expenses to appear on the programme, but the motives for both parties were so dubious, and the resulting programme so unsatisfactory, as to have made watching it an even more uncomfortable experience than its harrowing subject matter promised.

What is the purpose of the BBC making such a programme? Surely there is no public interest defence: we need to know more details about the lives of the Wests like we need to know what our neighbours have for dinner. Rather, Inside Cromwell Street served the public's understandable but base interest in delving deeper into the details of a case which has already been richly mined in court reports.

There may be an obsession among many people to learn every detail about every sordid chapter of Fred and Rosemary West's world, an obsession that veers wildly between the poles of revulsion and desire to know more — but for the BBC to induce us to cultivate that obsession is lamentable.

This is not squeamishness or prudishness: watching the brother and sister's testimonies was certainly disturbing, but the reason for doubting the value of Inside Cromwell Street is not that it caused upset to viewers, because sometimes upsetting viewers is a legitimate tactic for programme makers. Rather, the programme was questionable because we were being disturbed for no stronger reasons than that it helped Stephen and Mae to promote their book, and it gave the BBC a few crumbs to offer a supposedly insatiable audience.

Even on its own degraded terms, the programme was a failure. Like ITV's recent, and very similar, interview with Anne-Marie West, the BBC had been seduced by a tabloid agenda, but had none of the true tabloid's thoroughness in titillating the audience.

If a tabloid had got access to this pair, the result would have been, in a sick way, more satisfying than this. Tabloid journalists would have asked the difficult questions and got the difficult answers. They may be questions to which we are not entitled to receive answers, but better that than Inside Cromwell Street's hypocrisy of making a programme in which the pair talk about their family life for the purpose of titillating viewers, and then — through cowardice or belated scruples — not fulfilling that purpose.

Many of us, I suspect, have questions for the Wests' surviving children that were not clearly answered here. How much did they know of what was going on in the basement? How could Mae think her mother to be innocent, as she said at the outset? How do they carry on their lives? How can they form loving relationships?

Elsewhere there was a lighter perspective on current British life. **Modern Times: Lido** (BBC2) depicted the white and the red and the beautiful black of British bathers in their livid glory and, by the by, gave a handy spot of free advertising for a certain south London outdoor pool. If the programme makers were too in love with their sunny photography, and the interviewer unable to draw much of interest from the bathers, the mood of hedonistic calm was well conveyed. Only a mean-spirited bigot could not have been moved by the lesbian commitment ceremony at the poolside that ended the programme. It was a dream of a lovable country at ease with its racial, sexual and class differences. If only it was like that in the real world.

The grand daddy of world music

MUSIC
Ronald Atkins

DAVE BRUBECK never has problems reaching the fans. This much was clear from the applause that greeted him from the full house at the Barbican, gathered to witness the London leg of his 75th birthday tour.

A pioneer of world music, his two-fisted, classically-inspired approach to the jazz piano solo also made a big impact on Cecil Taylor, probably the most avant garde jazzer of them all.

To help him celebrate, the tour has become a family affair. Four sons took the stage with him, each of them with independent musical careers. Christopher, on electric bass, had the longest association with his father's groups, though both Daniel, on drums, and Darius, on keyboards, were part of the New Brubeck quartet. As someone who runs jazz studies at the University of Natal, Darius is well placed to absorb different cultures. One of his Gathering Forces albums featured an Indian flute player. Daniel powers the jazz-fusion group The Dolphins, while Matthew, the youngest, improvises on cello and plays in the Berkeley Symphony.

The London Symphony Orchestra was on hand as well, underlining another of Brubeck's crossover activities. All too often, a jazz quartet combines with an army of strings and brass in a concert hall like musical chalk and cheese. Here, Brubeck and the various arrangers knew what they were doing. Nothing very ambitious, true, but they managed to put over the essentials of both groups rather than disperse the lot in an amplified fog.

Dave Brubeck immediately announced himself on We Three Kings, banging away at one rhythm while Daniel, an impressive drummer, kept the basic beat going. Tension piled up higher on Three To Get Ready, as Brubeck mixed stride and boogie patterns into another multi-rhythmic concoction. I still found it rather stiff, and preferred the more gentle touch he brought to the ballads. But whether you approve or not, Brubeck remains an individual in a conformist age.



Dave Brubeck: brings a gentle touch to his ballads

Animal, vegetable, mineral and baseball

BEFORE I went to see the latest show by dance company Momix at Sadler's Wells, I knew almost nothing about America's national game. Two hours later, I was still pretty clueless, *writes Judith Mackrell.*

Under the direction of Moses Pendleton the gymnastic members of Momix have become masters of disguise. Using lights, fabric and props they've learnt to turn themselves into almost anything animal, vegetable or mineral. But in every show their act has felt disappointingly glib, full of smart tricks.

Baseball, a full-length work, seemed to promise more. In fact the sporting motif is simply an excuse for the same old stunts. The show might be punctuated with slides of baseball images and the dancers might be in baseball gear, but it's only a conceit.

A dancer who spins round and round for several minutes happens to have a ball in one hand; the men who perform Pendleton's signature "giant leap" use baseball bats instead of stilts. The dancers do their turns well, but they make even less impact than usual because Pendleton is so desperate to spin out his material. At one point anguished newspaper headlines projected on the stage announce the destruction of baseball by commercial greed and the cancellation of the World Series. I'd have felt a sympathetic twinge but for the grossly sentimental mourning dance and the section of Arvo Part's Stabat Mater that accompanied the news. Just once Pendleton got it right for me — when he had four women flying high on two giant rockers to the sound of We Are The Champions. The air turned thin and sharp with a feeling of risky exhilaration.

A passionate dissent

Andrew Motion

Blake
by Peter Ackroyd
Sinclair Stevenson 400pp £20

WILLIAM BLAKE'S patron, Thomas Butts, was fond of telling how he once visited the great man and found him and his wife sitting in the summerhouse of their Lambeth home reading Paradise Lost without the "troublesome disguises" of clothes. "Come in!" cried Blake, "It's only Adam and Eve, you know." Butts was amused but not scandalised. He knew that if he so much as raised an eyebrow, Blake would deluge him with justifications. The Ranters sometimes preached naked; Quakers went "naked for a sign"; Swedenborg believed that "nakedness corresponds to innocence" — and so on.

Peter Ackroyd mentions all these precedents, placing the story in a sequence which makes oddity seem logical. His book has no introduction to explain what redefinition he hopes it might achieve, but it's evident from his treatment of both life and work that one of his main purposes is to clear Blake from the charges of madness which dogged him while he was alive, and have clouded his reputation ever since.

It is a worthy aim, and his book is chock-a-block with enlightening cultural and metropolitan history. Few people write about London as well as Ackroyd. He is careful to explain technical aims and methods, he is good on Blake's political context, and he deftly outlines his revolutionary achievement. All these are important virtues, and they give his book distinction. Yet its treatment of this central issue — the business of the madness — is disappointingly under-developed.

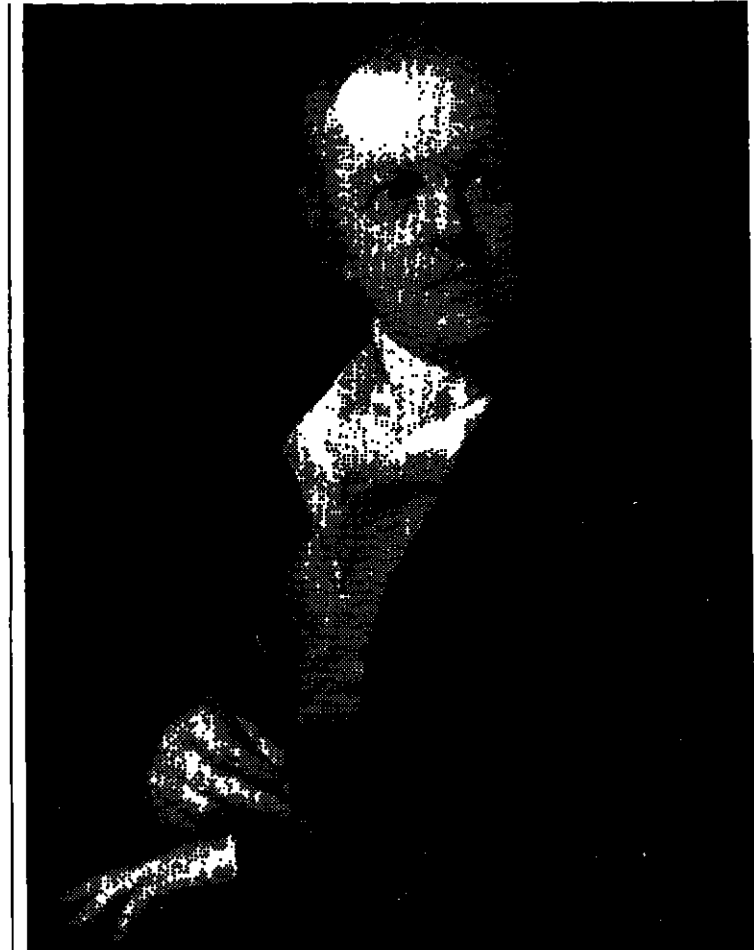
As Ackroyd condemns those who have complained that Blake was off his trolley, he says virtually nothing about how madness was regarded in the late 18th and early 19th century. Ida Macalpine and Richard Hunter's important George III And The Mad Business, for instance, is not in his bibliography; the widespread effect of the king's illness on public attitudes to lunacy is not discussed; links between the "fever" of Romantic self-consciousness and actual derangement are not explored. If we want to believe that most of Blake's ideas are perfectly sane, but that his expression of them was often strangely extreme, we need to know about these things. We have to understand the relationship between, on the one hand, his heroic wish to speak truth to power and, on the other, his tragic suffering as a victim of circumstance.

Ackroyd's previous studies of T S Eliot and Dickens have earned him the reputation of being our most flamboyant biographer. Blake, by contrast, is constrained. Its deep sympathies are bundled into a choked and often repetitive style, and its enthusiasm for his work is more remarkable for its consistency than anything else.

It's easy to guess why this might be so. Blake deals with a life that was vulnerable and head-bound. Ackroyd is not able to deploy his greatest strength as a biographer — that is, his skill as a shaper of stories. Instead, he has to ponder slow woundings and gradual shifts of emphasis. Born in London in 1757 and dying there in 1827, Blake left the capital only twice; marrying in 1782, he was separated from his wife for only two or three weeks during their 45 years together. Few other poets have lived so quietly.

Was this introspection and stasis chosen, or was it thrust upon Blake? Initially, at least, it was chosen. At the age of 10, Blake went to Henry Pars's drawing school, before becoming an apprentice engraver to James Basire in 1772. Hitherto he had been directed towards traditional models — Raphael, Rubens and Dürer; with Basire he was sent to engrave monuments in Westminster Abbey and, as the Gothic "line of Beauty" branded his imagination, it consolidated a fiercely original artistic ambition — one that encoded free-thinking in a very personal system of references while still advertising its challenge to authority.

Blake's wife, Catherine, and friends such as Thomas Stothard and James Flaxman, strengthened the framework of his binary imagination. Instead of turning towards the Establishment, he remained a tradesman-engraver — insisting that nature mattered less than parallel or allegorical invention, and that the self was both a shelter and the site of independence.



William Blake: at an odd angle to the universe PAINTING: T PHILLIPS (1807)

The writings of Swedenborg gave these contradictions a sharper definition. They became part of the philosophical basis on which he could explain the visions (of angels, of his dead brother James) that he had seen since boyhood. When he read Swedenborg describing "a certain state . . . (where) spirits have been seen to the very life", he felt that the lonely path he had chosen was in fact one that led to its own kind of congenial society. While he might not have joined the ranks of radicals he could practise his own kind of passionate dissent.

This is obvious in virtually all his paintings, drawings and engravings — from the early "Joseph of Arimathea" to such late masterpieces as "The Ancient of Days". Time and again, he shows a single, flamy figure whose isolation is an emblem of freedom — freedom to enlarge the self, and to criticise injustice. The same is true of his earliest poems — the "Songs of Innocence and Experience", "Tiriel" and "Thel". They are the work of someone able to shift easily from transcendence to practical complaint.

But as he produced these things, winning the friendly admiration of such influential fellow artists as Fuseli, Blake's recreations of life started to contain elements of retreat from it. The Prophetic Books he began writing — the first was The Marriage Of Heaven And Hell — are more grandly transmogrifying than anything he had attempted before, but their celebrations of the "human form divine" are entwined round emblems of great personal and social unhappiness.

Ackroyd explains this despair by pointing out how many of Blake's friends became famous while he continued to labour in obscurity. But the fact remains that he often quarrelled with those who tried to help him, he was late with commissions, he made no secret of his eccentricities. The reason for this, and the most moving element in his story, has to do with recognising that his art depended on remaining adversarial. Every figure he drew, every poem he wrote, from "America" to "The Four Zoas", demonstrates that only by keeping himself at an odd angle to the universe could he find ways of adequately realising the miseries of the world at large, and also its innate "divinity". It was a choice which cost him dearly: "My hands are labour'd day & night/And Ease comes never in my sight/My Wife has no indulgence given/Except what comes to her from heaven/We eat little, we drink less/This Earth breeds not our happiness."

Blake wrote this poem at Felpham on the Sussex coast, where he lived for a year or so under the patronage of the poet William Hayley. It should have been a time of confidence. In fact, it climaxed in a disaster — one that Ackroyd describes with a relish for drama that he is denied elsewhere. Finding a soldier lounging in his garden one day, Blake got into an argument and was tried for sedition. It was a serious charge, but this was not the only reason why Blake felt forced into even greater despondency. He interpreted the whole hurtful episode as proof of his unchangeable otherness.

By the time Blake returned to London he was convinced, as Ackroyd says, that "nothing but disappointment and defeat [lay] ahead of him. Further patrons appeared and departed. A one-man show failed. Work was commissioned at a dismal rate. Only new friendships with John Linnell, John Varley and Samuel Palmer brightened isolation. Yet as we pity his neglect, we view his integrity with steadily deepening admiration. His eccentricities were not evidence of madness but marks of "woe" — and of triumphant individualism. If we have taken so long to realise this, we have only ourselves to blame.

Order and chaos in the byways of life

Will Eaves

Whit
by Iain Banks
Little, Brown 455pp £15.99

THE Order of Luskentyrians is a mystical sect based near Stirling in Scotland that combines primitivism (no cars, no electricity, one bath a week and plenty of manual labour) with vigorous polygamy. Understandably, its acolytes smell a bit ripe, but then, as Isis Whit, one of the cult's favoured daughters, points out in a neat reversal of Puritanism, cleanliness is next to Godlessness: unbelievers in the odourless world at large are known as "Blands".

Blandness has its advantages if you have something to hide, however, as Isis discovers when her absentee cousin, Morag, informs the sect by letter that she will not be attending its quadriennial orgy, the Festival of Love. The Order is incensed, and Isis is sent out among the Unsaved to retrieve her cousin who, it turns out, has been leading a lucrative double life as the porn queen Fusillada Debauch.

The search for Morag — indeed the whole, rather mechanical plot in Iain Banks's entertaining new novel — may be no more than a pretext for us to observe Isis, a naive 19-year-old, coming to terms with the limits of her faith. But the resilience of that creed, and its apostle's youthful idealism, are comically inspired. The Order's holy Principle of Indirectness and Interstiality, for example, which reminds us that "merit and calmness are to be found in the by-ways of life", takes on new meaning when applied to public transport systems. Isis needs to take a train from Edinburgh to London ("Babylondon", as Sister Angela has it) but, conscious that trains symbolise technological corruption, resolves to take it indirectly — and stows away on a car freight train. Similarly, on arrival in London, she "back busses" across the capital — proceeding along a given bus route by asking for a ticket in the opposite direction and then feigning confusion.

Isis's entire mission is, of course, a paradigm of indirectness, her only crime that of all picaresque heroes and heroines, who set out armed with one text to read the world only to discover that the world reads it rather differently. Or not at all. Thus she pursues Morag to a Spanish villa (in Essex), and finds herself confronted by a Doberman ("like a dinosaur with a cough") and a posse of Brentwood skinheads. Undeterred, she follows her trail to a health farm in Somerset and is arrested at a police roadblock outside Glastonbury ("some sort of party in a field"). She spends the night in custody, and is released into the arms of her hell-raising Texan grandmother, Yolanda. The whole quest turns out to have been engineered by a corrupt Luskentyrian, envious of Isis's status as the Elect of God and eager to wrest control of the Order from its lecherous founder, Grandfather Salvador.

In the interstices of her narrative, Isis reflects on the Order's origins and on her own miraculous healing power. As we are led to suspect from the start, the founder's holy revelations are revealed to be wholly without foundation (a nasty knock on the head and a criminal cover-up, in fact). But while the proposition that the charismatic cult is the prisoner of the imagination at its helm is perfectly admissible as low-grade group psychology, it is also a bit lacking in the thrills department.

What matters is the quality of that imagination or personality disorder, and the resources it can command. In this respect, a sect on the radical fringe of a larger faith, such as the Rev Chris Brain's Nine O'Clock Service in Sheffield, may be more disturbing than a cult because it has not altogether relinquished its claim to orthodoxy. In any case, weighed against what Banks might have been expected to do with a messianic religious leader, the red-faced, Bunter-esque Salvador — "I am not a charlatan" (oh yes he is) — simply isn't in the running.

Isis's paranormal gifts appear to be genuine. Banks leaves this undecided as a sceptical concession to anti-rationalism. But, in what one takes to be a sinister echo of New Age business-speak, she promises to provide the cult with greater "accountability", "a more formal structure" and to set up an "executive board". All of which, like the cult itself, sounds great but doesn't wash.

In the end, Isis, Morag, Salvador and the rest are just too nice for the book's good. It may, of course, be Bank's point that Isis's immersion in the world proves, as Italo Calvino once pointed out, that irrationalism is not "extraneous to the reason of things". But the fact that, in a rational society, we believe certain things without any evidential basis for those beliefs is hardly news.

With Christmas in mind, Joanna Carey takes a look at the best of this year's children's books

WHILE "children's television" as such may be shrinking — the end of Jackanory, cut-backs in viewing is going on apace. Children may be less observant of the natural world today, but the bewildering diversity of what they glean from the screen — TV video, film and computer — inevitably makes them both familiar with and quick to interpret (in their own way) all kinds of visual imagery. If channelled, it's a skill that gives them a head start in following the narrative in picture books. Unlike TV, books give you control over the pace of a story, and particularly with the recent crop of wordless picture books the scope for imaginative exploration, observation and discussion is limitless.

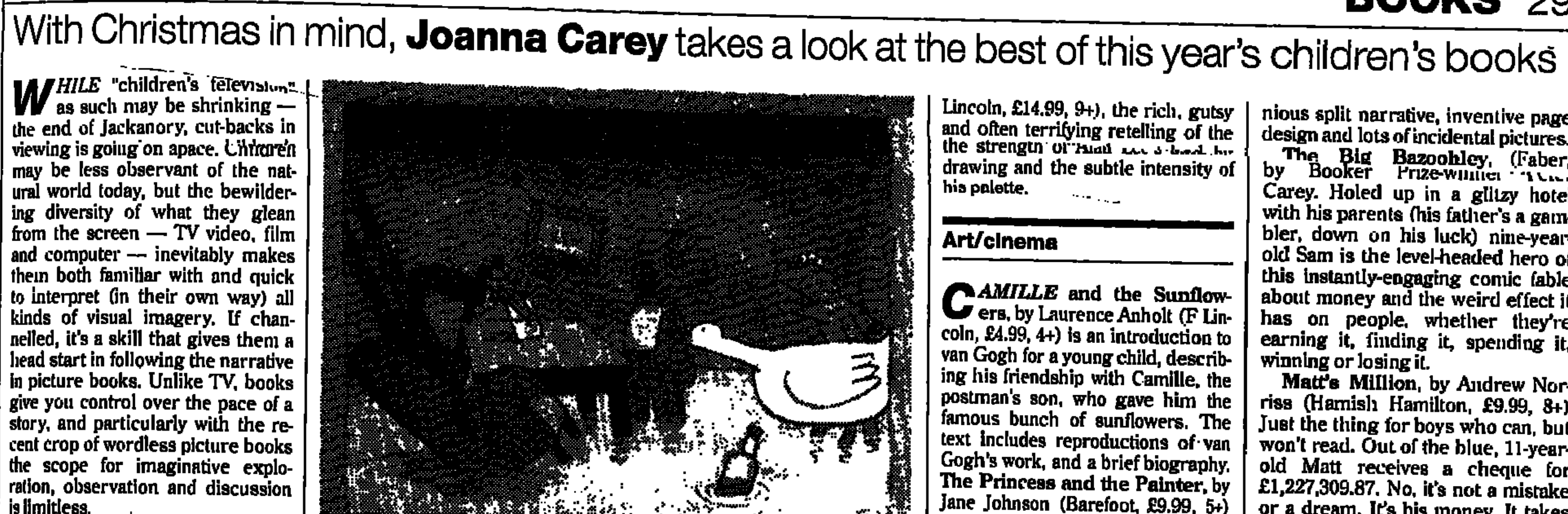
In **Clown** (Cape, £9.99, 4+) Quentin Blake, a master of graphic eloquence, tells the story, in pictures alone, of an unwanted toy clown who's been slung in the bin. The deceptive slapdashery of Blake's drawing captures every subtle change of mood as the resourceful Clown climbs out of the bin, dusts himself down and sets off in search of adventure.

Peter Collington uses a succession of intricately detailed paintings to explore the exacting work of **The Tooth Fairy** (Cape, £9.99, 5+). By night, she collects teeth from under pillows, replacing them with the coins she makes in her foundry from melted down silver chippings — or are they old fillings? Back home, she recycles the teeth, mending piano keys. A gentle, endlessly absorbing, fantasy.

Zoom (Viking, £9.99, all ages) by Istvan Banyai has slick, attractive Hergé-style artwork. With no text, a series of cunningly interrelated images plays a succession of visual tricks by continually shifting the context, the scale and the perspective. Readers — and here children are often quicker than adults — must re-adjust their perceptions at every opening and a clever ending puts the whole world in its place.

Clement Moore's classic story poem **The Night Before Christmas** (North South, £9.95, 5+) is great for reading aloud. Ravishing new watercolour illustrations by Ted Rand evoke the 19th-century New England period, with stockings on the chimney, and children safe under their quilts in an attic room lit by snowy reflections. But Rand's picture of St Nicholas — a jovial full-bellied character is perhaps just the kind of image that has traumatised the little girl in **A Message for Santa**, by Hiawyn Oram and Tony Ross (Andersen, £8.99, 5+). Emily is terrified of Santa. "Not down our chimney," she says. She blocks up the fireplace and leaves a message, setting out the terms under which she's prepared to negotiate Christmas. Santa is cheered by her honesty and the problem is solved. A thoughtful, very funny story about being upfront about the things you're frightened of.

Christmas always brings a new Frog book from Max Velthuijs. In **Frog Is a Hero** (Andersen, £7.99, 3+) Pig, Duck and Hare are in trouble. Frog gains everyone's respect when he risks his own life to get help. Both serious and funny, in their charming simplicity these wonderful books show young children how we depend upon one another. **The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey**, by Susan Wojciechowski (Walker, £9.99, all ages) pulls out all the Yuletide stops. It features a tragic, lonely woodcarver, a brave young widow and her little boy who wants a nativity set. A beautiful, generously proportioned book.



Every picture tells a story: From Frog Is A Hero (above) by Max Velthuijs and Clown (below) by Quentin Blake

A lyrical text governs the pace of **The Little Boat** (Walker, £8.99, 3+), by Kathy Henderson, illustrated by Patrick Benson. A toy boat made by a child slips out of its harbour and sails out to sea. Ever smaller and lonelier it becomes a mere dot on the ocean. With magical use of scale, Benson's close-hatched illustrations give a mesmerising account of the little boat's brush with infinity, and its safe landing on a tropical shore in the hands of another child. A perfect picture book.

Poetry and verse

RHYMES **for Annie Rose**, by Shirley Hughes (Bodley Head, £9.99, 3+) Tall terraced houses, wet streets, open skies, fireside stories and proper bedtimes: Shirley Hughes's verses create a world of imaginative freedom and emotional security made even more real by the tactile warmth of her drawing, and the liberating breadth and energy of her watercolours.

Tickle in Your Tummy: poems by black and Asian writers (edited by Judith Elkin and Carlton Duncan, ill. Rhian Nest James, Macdonald Young Books, £4.99, 4-7) "Humpty Dumpty si dung pon a wall/Humpty Dumpty drap affa de wall" along with Anancy the spider, and Ganesh the elephant god, and poems for Divali and Cheung Chau Festival, traditional rhymes here link up with the distinctive contemporary voices of Valerie Bloom, John Agard and many others in this energetic collection.

In **Here Come the Aliens!** by Colin McNaughton (Walker, £9.99, 3+), rhythmic verses with a rousing refrain usher in an intergalactic parade of space oddities, deliciously detailed with mad staring eyeballs, warty pick'n'mix complexions and sink-plunger extremities. Inventive typography, irresistible rhymes and a surprise ending.

Collected Animal Poems, by Ted Hughes (Faber, vols 1&2 £3.99, vols 3&4 £5.99, 7+) Thirty years' worth of animal poems here: crows, shrews, shrikes and sticklebacks; wolves, whelks and weasels; a prodigious, magical assembly of creatures, captured one by one in the headlights of Hughes's intense gaze. These four volumes constitute a "book for life" with the poems arranged in a sequence of increasing complexity.

Starlight Starbright, chosen by Anne Harvey (Julia McRae, £12.99, 5+) A collection of night-time poems from Stevenson, James Reeves, Longfellow, Walter de la Mare etc. Unlike many illustrators of children's anthologies, Browne's watercolours complement but never intrude on the poems' imagery.

Classic Poems to Read Aloud, selected by James Berry, ill. James Mayhew (Kingfisher, £10.99, 9+) Combining visionary zeal, robust popular tradition and "wider than usual cultural experiences", Berry gathers an extended "family" of voices where Homer and A A Milne meet Keats, Emily Dickinson, Seamus Heaney and Martin Luther King.

Poems for Christmas, by Neil Philips (Hodder, £9.99, 8+) is a wonderful, varied collection, with George Mackay Brown, e e cummings, Charles Causley, Boris Pasternak, Langston Hughes, Osip Mendelstam and Adrian Mitchell. Beautifully produced, with the traditional imagery of John Lawrence's woodcuts, it will look as good in 20 years as it does today.

Classics, myths and legends

IN **The Orchard Book of Creation Stories** (Orchard, £12.99, 6+), stories from all over the world are vividly retold by Margaret Mayo. A beautiful book, lit from within by the glowing dreamlike imagery of Louise Brierley's powerful illustrations. For slightly older children, **The Golden Hoard: Myths and Legends of the World**, by Geraldine McCaughrean (Orion £14.99) is illustrated by Bee Willey, whose innovative work darkly enhances McCaughrean's storytelling and adds a further dimension of magic and mystery. In **The Wanderings of Odysseus**, by Rosemary Sutcliff, ill. Alan Lee (Frances Lincoln, £14.99, 9+), the rich, gutsy and often terrifying retelling of the the strength of [illegible] drawing and the subtle intensity of his palette.

Art/cinema

CAMILLE **and the Sunflowers**, by Laurence Anholt (F Lincoln, £4.99, 4+) is an introduction to van Gogh for a young child, describing his friendship with Camille, the postman's son, who gave him the famous bunch of sunflowers. The text includes reproductions of van Gogh's work, and a brief biography. **The Princess and the Painter**, by Jane Johnson (Barefoot, £9.99, 5+) is based on Velázquez's "Las Meninas". This enchanting book depicts a busy day in the life of the five-year-old Infanta Margarita. All the court characters are there, and it culminates in the princess's first look at Velázquez' finished painting. Velázquez was one of the artists to whom Picasso paid homage, and his 1957 version of "Las Meninas" is featured in **Picasso**, by Stefano Loria (MacDonald Young Books £12.99, 10+). This large-format book, crammed with photographs, sketches and reproductions, sets Picasso in a historical context, with his family, his contemporaries, his influences and offers a vigorous intelligent introduction to his work. John Farman, in his **Complete (and Utter) History of Art** (Macmillan, £4.99, 11+), merrily includes everything from cave painting to Gilbert and George. **The Young Oxford Book of Cinema**, by David Parkinson (OUP, £12.99, 10+) is a substantial, well-written, generously illustrated history to celebrate cinema's centenary.

Pop-ups and activity books

THE **Sleeping Beauty**, by Phillida Gill (Doubleday, £9.99, 3+) is the subtlest and most magical of this year's pop up books. Like its heroine, it is both delicate and surprisingly robust. **Big Yellow Taxi**, by Ken Wilson Max (David Bennet £7.99, 2-6) is a tough, chunky, interactive board book about driving. Moving parts include dip stick, petrol pump, seat-belts, steering wheel and carwash. Irresistible. **Make Your Own Dinosaur**, by Jez Frazer (The Ebury Press, £14.99, all ages) is a huge, informative book containing the wherewithal to construct a 6-foot long cardboard skeleton of the vicious carnivore Deinonychus. No glue involved, just scissors and 160 paper fasteners. **Mrs Noah's Patchwork Quilt**, by Janet Bolton (Tango, £11.99, 5+ with help) is a story book, a picture book and instruction manual, all in one. Using the fabric patterns provided, you can make a traditional quilt featuring all the animals on the ark. Very beautiful, relatively simple.

New fiction

DOUBLE ACT, by Jacqueline Wilson (Doubleday, £8.99, age 8+) is an exuberant story about 10-year-old identical twins with an ingenious split narrative, inventive page design and lots of incidental pictures.

The Big Bazoohley, (Faber, [illegible]) by Booker Prize-winner [illegible] Carey. Holed up in a glitzy hotel with his parents (his father's a gambler, down on his luck) nine-year-old Sam is the level-headed hero of this instantly-engaging comic fable about money and the weird effect it has on people, whether they're earning it, finding it, spending it, winning or losing it.

Matt's Million, by Andrew Norriss (Hamish Hamilton, £9.99, 8+) Just the thing for boys who can, but won't read. Out of the blue, 11-year-old Matt receives a cheque for £1,227,309.87. No, it's not a mistake or a dream. It's his money. It takes on a life of its own and threatens to change Matt's life, too.

A Candle in the Dark, by Adele Geras (Black, £6.99, ill. Elsie Lenox, 8-12) It's Christmas 1938, and to escape the Nazis, Clara and her small brother, like many other Jewish children, have been sent from Germany to stay with a family in England. Simply a masterpiece of sensitive, perfectly pitched storytelling.

Granny the Pag, by Nina Bawden (Hamish Hamilton, £10.99, 11+) Catriona — independent and wise beyond her 12 years — is living happily with her unconventional grandmother, until her parents try to reclaim her, and a court case ensues. Wry, witty, needle sharp and uncompromising as ever, Bawden works some intriguing and often uncomfortable threads into the plot of this complex, beautifully crafted novel.

Birds in the Wilderness, by Kate Elizabeth Ernest (Methuen, £9.99, 10+) Sent from Jamaica to join the parents she hardly remembers, Hope arrives in the cold, damp, hostile atmosphere of Britain in the sixties. Her new life at home — and at school, where she's the only black girl in her class — is described with an unswerving candour and a sharp humorous eye for period detail.

Muck and Magic: stories from the countryside (ed by Michael Morpurgo, Heinemann, £12.99; £3.99 pbk, 10+) Joanna Lumley, Quentin Blake, Berlie Doherty and Anthony Browne are among the many authors and artists contributing to this collection of countryside stories. Dick King-Smith's unsentimental story has the strongest whiff of the muck-heap; magic is perhaps most evident in a creation tale by Ted Hughes.

Mercedes Ice, by Philip Ridley, ill. by Chris Riddell (Viking, £9.99, 10+) Spiky, eye-widening urban fairytale set in a brittle forest of concrete and rusting TV aerials, in the wasteland on top of a tower block. Ridley and Riddell have created something of a new genre. Their fourth collaboration, and best yet.

Northern Lights, by Philip Pullman (Point, £12.99, 11+) is set in the vast breadth of a new but curiously familiar universe, with Lyra, its investigative live-wire of a heroine. This is the first volume of what promises to be a highly original and involving trilogy.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995

Horthwick moves in

Colin Luckhurst

WHEN I was telling you, earlier this year, of our domestic retinue of three neutered queens here at The Droppings, I little thought, given this serious oversupply of cats, that we would shortly see an increase in the complement of feline residents.

Overcatted though we clearly are, we have, in recent months, involuntarily become hosts to a fourth, unrelated cat, a tatty young tom who has clearly adopted us and slowly ingratiated himself into the household.

We believe Horthwick to be a refugee from socialism. This is because he looks alarmingly like the young kitten who was resident with prominent local members of Tony Blair's new model Labour party who, until recently, lived just down the lane from The Droppings.

I mustn't make too many jokes about New Labour because there are enough around already and I am able to reveal to you that the lady shepherdess has enrolled as a member. So the onward march of socialism is clearly assured. Or is it? Although my suggestion that we call this tom Prescott has been turned down flat I shall not be following her example. As a former Liberal activist, indeed a one time parliamentary candidate, I remain a fixed centrist, though the lady shepherdess feels that I have fallen off the right edge of the political spectrum.

Anyway, the household from which we believe young Horthwick has fled was probably old Labour and a bit out of fashion now, for the distaff side of the household represents the community in the Labour interest on the local district council.

They had to move because the rural property down the lane became too demanding as Pat, the recently retired house-husband, recovered from hear surgery undertaken, oddly enough, in the cardiology department where our son-in-law is now a consultant in the hi-tech medical specialism that inserts tiny balloons into leg arteries and sends them round the system to relieve pressures elsewhere.

But even before their move we had noticed increasingly frequent appearances by a tatty looking stray feline who appeared in the purlieus of The Droppings from early summer onwards.

He ravenously ate [illegible] the porch and not finished by our very particular queens, for whom even some lightly oak, smoked salmon or caviar needs to be very fresh (that's a joke). Over the months he edged closer and eventually felt comfortable enough to come into the house, where he gave every indication of being appreciative of breakfast, lunch, tea and dinner.

He is, moreover, now relaxed enough to seek a snooze on our laps should we sit down for a moment or two. When he does this, one notices that he has put on some weight.

His addition to the household has not been greeted with universal acclaim. Spats, the senior queen, and her elder daughter, Brain Damage, are equable.

Bonnie, the youngest queen and a seriously spoilt cat, is most uneasy and likely to lash out if the newcomer passes by. Horthwick is powerfully muscled and I feel she may be pushing her luck.

His scarred face tells that he has faced some challenges in the past and is clearly capable of dishing out a pasting should circumstances require feline fisticuffs. He probably thinks that with three female cats available he's on a winner come the mating season, with his own private harem.

But they have all had the small operation so he'll never understand why his efforts do not lead to clutches of kittens. Which is fortunate, to say the least, because we remain seriously oversupplied on the cat front.

In response to several readers' inquiries, Ralph Whitlock's Letters From An English Countryside is still available, price £4.95, from Ex Libris Press, 1 The Shambles, Bradford on Avon, Wiltshire BA15 1JS. Tel/fax (+44)1225-863595

Chess Leonard Barden

IT IS VERY rare for two decisive games of significant length to be repeated. "Significant" is the operative word, for there are many instances of opening traps claiming dozens or hundreds of victims.

Following wide publicity for Kasparov's successful use of the Dragon Sicilian against Anand, club players who decide to follow the world champion are potential fall guys for this sequence, first pulled off in 1943: **1 e4 c5 2 Nf3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 Nxd4 Nf6 5 Nc3 g6 6 f4 Bg7 7 e5 dxe5?** (Nh5!) **8 fxe5 Ng4? 9 Bb5+ Kf8? 10 Ne6+ Resigns.**

Grandmasters and experts long ago assimilated such traps, so game duplication in international play usually means a pre-arranged or tacitly agreed draw.

The most striking instance occurred at Hastings 1974-75, where Albin Planinc of Yugoslavia sacrificed a rook, then a queen to checkmate Rafael Vaganian, later USSR champion.

Other players were impressed until somebody thought to consult an openings book, which revealed a game from Havana 1963 with an identical pawn offer. During the 1963 post-mortem, the great Mikhail Tal quickly spotted the finish which Planinc painstakingly worked out over the board 12 years later. Today we have giant chess databases, so debunking would be swift.

Vaganian-Planinc, English Opening

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 c5 3 Nf3 cxd4 4 Nxd4 e6 5 Nc3 Bb4 6 Nb5 This sequence normally arises from 1 c4. Solid alternatives here are 6 Bd2 and 6 g3. **0-0 7 a3 Bxc3+ 8 Nxc3 d5 9 Bg5 h6 10 Bxf6** 10 Bh4, safeguarding the bishop pair, is more consistent with his previous play.

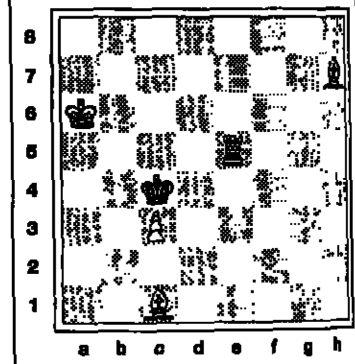
Qxf6 11 cxd5 exd5 12 Qxd5? Rd8 13 Qf3? Taking the pawn is dangerous, allowing an active BQ even more so. 13 Qb3 is best **Qb6 14 Rd1 Rxd1+ 15 Nxd1 Nc6 16 Qe3?** White could still fight on by developing normally: 16 e3 Be6 17 Be2 Rd8 18 0-0 [illegible]sation for a pawn but not yet a forced win.

Nd4! 17 Qe8+ Kh7 18 e3 Nc2+ 19 Kd2 Bf5! 20 Qxa8 Qd6+ 21 Kc1 Na1! Putting your knight in the corner in the middle game always makes a strong impression.

22 Qxb7 If White stops mate by 22 b4 then Nb3+ 23 Kb2 Qd2+ 24 Kxb3 Qc2 mate.

Qc7+! The spectator thriller at Hastings, all foreseen 12 years earlier with the difference that Tal wanted to sacrifice his queen at c1. **23 Resigns.**

No 2400



White mates in three moves, against any defence (by Zsofia Polgar, 1984). During San Francisco 1995, Polgar remembered the problem she had composed as a 10-year-old prodigy, reproduced it on a napkin, and invited the grandmasters to solve it.

Korchnoi gave up after two minutes, and six-time US champion Browne refused to try, saying he needed a board. John Nunn found the answer in 45 seconds. How do you compare?

No 2399: 1 Ne5 (threat 2 Rxc4) Rxe5 2 Qb6 or Rxf6+ 2 Nc6. Traps are 1 Ne1 Rxf6+ or 1 N3xf4 Kxe4 or 1 N3b4 cxb3 or 1 Nc5 Qxe4.

Quick crossword no. 292

Across

1 Lay bare (6)
4 Short period of rain (6)
8 (Beginning of) attack (5)
9 Channel under road etc (7)
10 Night wear (7)
11 Coniferous tree (5)
12 Pompous in speech (9)
17 Greek poet (5)
19 Encroach (7)
21 Large number (7)
22 Unit of money or weight (5)
23 One by one (6)
24 Fairly — fair! (6)

Down

1 Sagging (as drawers) (6)
2 Cosmetic surgery on prominent feature (4,3)
3 It is given (5)
5 The call (snag) — virago (4-3)
6 Use or brandish (5)
7 Come back (6)
9 Discontinuance (9)
13 Warlike (7)
14 Lead — behaviour! (7)
15 Name for sceptic? (6)
16 Lethal (6)
18 Large fruit (5)
20 Sort of money, clip, tiger, etc (5)

Last week's solution

Bridge Zia Mahmood

A RECENT stopover in Paris dispelled my mistaken idea that Hallowe'en was an American invention. The city was filled with costumes and horrors of every unimaginable kind. I was on my way to Denmark for the newest European prestige event, the Politiken World Pairs. Politiken is the leading Danish newspaper, and the exceptional publicity given to the event ensured that crowds of spectators attended.

There is a truly international flavour at such events, with old friends and rivals from around the world. The effervescent Jaggy Shivdasani was there from India, with the imperturbable Sanatu Ghose as his partner. I took the opportunity to congratulate Sabine Auken and Daniela von Arnim of Germany, not only on their recent World Championship triumph but on the birth of Sabine's new baby boy.

At six months, he must be the youngest veteran of a World Championship ever! The main attraction was bridge's best-known ambassador, Omar Sharif, who was playing with World Bridge Federation president José Damiani. Omar, his dashing looks and mournful eyes now dignified by a silver mane of hair, was the object of relentless attention from the media and from the inevitable row of female admirers.

I was playing with Peter Weichsel, who had travelled from California but did not allow the trip across several time zones to affect his play. Here he is in action against the Italian European champions, Lanzarotti and Buratti. Love all, dealer East:

North
♠ A Q 8 3
♥ 8 4 3
♦ Q J 2
♣ K 6 4

West
♠ 10 7 6 2
♥ K 10 7 6 5
♦ 10 6 4
♣ 7

East
♠ K J 9 5 4
♥ Q 9
♦ A K 8 7 5
♣ 2

South
♠ None
♥ A J 2
♦ 9 3
♣ A Q J 10 9 8 5 3

The bidding was brief and mercifully natural:

South	West	North	East
Weich'l	Buratti	Zia	L'rotti
			1♠
5♣	No	No	No

It appeared to the spectators that five clubs would be one down — one of South's losers could be discarded on the ace of spades, but that still left three red suit tricks for the defenders. West led the seven of spades and Peter played low, ruffing East's jack with the eight of clubs. He drew trumps in one round with the queen, and led the nine of diamonds. West could have saved the day by covering with the ten, but when he played low it was all over for the defence. Peter ran the nine of diamonds — a Chinese finesse by an American against an Italian in Denmark must surely be a first for world bridge!

East won the nine of diamonds with the king and did his best by switching to the queen of hearts, but Peter went up with the ace. He played the five of clubs to dummy's six and discarded his remaining diamond on the ace of spades. Now he led the queen of diamonds from dummy, ruffing when East covered with the ace. Crossing back to dummy with the three of clubs to the four, Peter discarded a losing heart on the jack of diamonds, conceded a heart and claimed his contract. I wish all my partners could be California guys!

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
December 17 1995

Rugby League

Saints keep marching on

Paul Fitzpatrick

ST HELENS were without the cup-tied Paul Newlove and they lost the game's leading try-scorer Anthony Sullivan after only 12 minutes in the Regal Trophy quarter-final at Knowsley Road on Sunday, but it made little difference to the final outcome of the match.

Saints are running white-hot at present and Halifax had almost as much difficulty trying to curb them as they had in last month's league match, when St Helens ran in 58 points. This time they lost 46-18.

Sullivan's replacement, the 18-year-old Danny Arnold, scored two of Saints' eight tries and gave further evidence of his rich promise. "We have a real winner here," Saints' coach Eric Hughes said afterwards.

There were also two tries for another youngster, Joey Hayes, on the right wing. Perelini, Gibbs, Northey and Cunningham got the others in an emphatic performance.

Sullivan's loss proved nothing like as serious for Saints as did the departure of John Bentley for Halifax. He was carried off on a stretcher with a suspected fractured cheekbone in the 22nd minute and the Yorkshiremen, well in contention at 8-8, were never as good thereafter.

Halifax, through the consistently dangerous Umaga, scored first. He was to get a second try in the 68th minute but between times Saints produced football of rich vintage. They led 20-8 at half-time and then steadily took the contest away from Halifax with tries that in the case of Perelini owed something to sheer strength, and in those of Arnold and Hayes everything to subtlety.

Wigan had a rare fright in their match with Widnes. They won 28-23 but only after the game had gone into extra-time.

Only when Gary Connolly scored the final try in extra time could Wigan afford to relax, and then only because Widnes scarcely had the energy even to restart the game.

It is not clear whether the First Division club's financial plight is a new crisis or simply an extension of the one that gripped them in 1993. That led to the exit of a clutch of high-class players, Jonathan Davies among them, and it was hard to see how Widnes could recover. The next disappointment came with the Super League, which starts next March without them.

Had it not been for Christian Tyrer striking a post with an attempted drop goal and the unfortunate loss to the sin-bin of their inspirational captain Steve McCurrie for the final 10 minutes of normal time, Widnes might have been celebrating a deserved place in the last four.

Carlisle's hopes of a semi-final place were shattered at Headingley. Initially they led 6-0 but Leeds ran in nine tries to win 44-22. In the other quarter-final Warrington defeated Rochdale 38-20.

Tennis Compaq Grand Slam Cup



Served hot . . . Ivanisevic celebrates after four aces seal a straight-sets victory over Todd Martin PHOTOGRAPH: LUDWIG HUEBL

Winning aces that trump the game

David Irvine in Munich

FIRE, reload, fire, reload, blank, reload, fire . . . Sunday's Compaq Grand Slam Cup final in Munich, which might more appropriately have been staged at Bisley, was a disaster waiting to happen. Not perhaps for Goran Ivanisevic, whose 7-6, 6-3, 6-4 victory over Todd Martin marked a high point in the left-handed Croat's turbulent career (as well as earning him more than $1.5 million), but most surely for the game's image.

On a lightning-fast court, allegedly 25 per cent slower than last year, Ivanisevic smacked down 28 aces — four in succession to finish it off, including his 1,000th of the year — and was in such command that he faced break point only once. Though lasting 103 minutes, it was a contest with little to commend it.

Ivanisevic, a first-round loser on his three most recent indoor appearances, admitted that he had arrived at the Olympiahalle with no serious expectations. Encouraged by an emphatic first-round win over the 1993 champion Petr Korda and then helped by Pete Sampras's withdrawal — that gave him a free ride to the semi-finals — he finally proved himself with victories over Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Martin.

"Today I achieved what I've always wanted to. I played my best tennis in a final. I was not scared to hit any shot at any time and I served unbelievably." No one, least of all the hapless Martin, would quarrel with that.

Throughout the week the one-shot delivery has proved an intimidating weapon. Like Boris Becker and Sampras, Ivanisevic is capable of serving almost monotonously at 125mph or more and on Sunday he simply pulverised the ball. "Aces don't count," claimed Ivanisevic. "I hit 200 at Wimbledon in 1992 and I didn't win, so they don't mean anything." Except, he admitted, at the moment they come. And for Ivanisevic they came up repeatedly on cue all week long.

Having saved a break point at 1-2 in the first set, his only moment of crisis, Ivanisevic edged ahead in the tie-break with a ferocious forehand return that caught Martin off-guard. Two aces gave the Croat the set. He struck again in the eighth game of the second, forcing an error from the American with a deeply hit top-spin backhand, and in the seventh game of the third when Martin shuffled a timid backhand into the net.

Martin tried his best to deny Ivanisevic his 1,000th ace, but the Croat knew his moment of glory had arrived at 5-4. Four strokes were enough. On none of them did Martin even move.

Ivanisevic, who expects to announce the name of a former tour player as his new coach, said a part of his prize-money would go towards a foundation he is to set up for disadvantaged Croat children.

Whether he should have been able to go to work on such a court was the subject of much debate later. Even the organisers, unmoved by criticism in the past, are beginning to have misgivings. Ivanisevic, who had not won any tournament in 18 months, follows Magnus Larsson and Korda — neither of whom has yet won a Grand Slam event — as cup winners.

A look at the balls in use and the date of the event now seems likely. Privately, several ITF officials say they would like to see the cup decided in October, preferably within a month of the US Open, as they feel it would be much more attractive for the top players then.

● Britain won promotion to the Champions' Division at the European Men's Team Championship in Dublin on Sunday after completing their third victory with a 2-0 win over Israel. Tim Henman beat Noam Behr 6-2, 6-1, and Greg Rusedski overcame Eyal Ran 6-2, 6-2. The concluding doubles was not played because all issues had been settled.

Earlier, the British pair produced impressive form to take a winning 2-0 lead against Ireland. Henman, the 21-year-old who has just broken into the world's top 100 at No 98, beat John Doran 6-1, 6-2 and Rusedski defeated Scott Barron 7-5, 6-2.

Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Forest's French strike

NOTTINGHAM FOREST continued their progress in Europe with a narrow 1-0 aggregate victory over Olympique Lyonnais in the second leg of the third round of the Uefa Cup last week. Forest had gone to France with a 1-0 advantage from the first leg and it was enough to see them through as the game ended in a goalless draw.

As against Malmo and Auxerre in the previous rounds and against Lyon in the first leg of this tie, Britain's last remaining side in Europe survived attack after attack to make the last eight. In the quarter-final they are matched against the Teutonic might of Bayern Munich, who overwhelmed Benfica 7-2 on aggregate. But Forest have until March to map out their approach.

Blackburn Rovers and Glasgow Rangers regained some pride in their final European Champions' League games, though they both finished bottom of their groups — and each had a player sent off in the last match.

Rovers finally broke their duck in Europe when they beat Rosenborg of Trondheim at Ewood Park. And they did it in style, with Mike Newell notching up the fastest hat-trick in the tournament's history.

He guided his side to a 4-1 victory, with his three goals coming in nine minutes just before half-time. His first was a swerving right-foot shot, quickly followed by a power header and the hat-trick was completed with a close-range sidefoot effort. Rovers lost their midfielder, Paul Warhurst, in the 51st minute when he was sent off after a mistimed tackle.

Rangers earned a creditable 2-2 draw against Germany's Borussia Dortmund. The Scottish league champions went ahead after 10 minutes through Brian Laudrup, but Borussia hit back six minutes later and gained the lead shortly after the interval. Paul Gascoigne was dismissed for a second bookable offence before Gordon Durie celebrated his 30th birthday by earning his team a draw in the dying minutes of the game.

THE Labour party published a document on its policy on football, offering "a new vision" for the game. The Framework For Football promises to set up a task force to look at the problems the game faces and to prosecute in Britain those football hooligans who commit offences abroad and who, at the moment, merely suffer deportation. The charter states the party's commitment to strengthening the laws on racial abuse, the tightening of financial regulations in the game, setting standards of stewarding and ensuring that major sporting events, particularly the FA Cup final, are available on terrestrial television.

SOME fast footwork enabled Australian international Damian Mori to stake his claim to the quickest goal in senior football history when his team, Adelaide City, took on Sydney United in the Australian National League. From the kick-off Bradley Hasell passed to Mori who, finding the opposition goalkeeper, John Perosh, off his line, lobbed the ball over him and into the net. The goal was timed at 3.69 seconds. Other goals timed at under four seconds are in record books, but this is the only one on film.

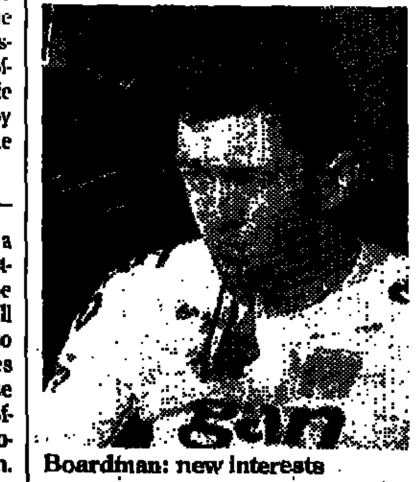
THE tattered reputation of boxing received another blow when angry fans threw beer and champagne bottles, glasses and coins into the ring after South African Francois Botha was declared the winner in a split decision for the IBF heavyweight title against Axel Schulz in Stuttgart. Six people were taken to hospital. In the bout itself, Botha was more aggressive at the start and kept his defence tight when the German tried to step up the pace.

In London, Paul "Scrap Iron" Ryan knocked out Ross Hale in 132 seconds to capture the British and Commonwealth light welterweight title.

SCOTLAND'S John Higgins scored a 9-3 victory over Ken Doherty to take the German Snooker Open in Frankfurt. Doherty had reached the final by beating Stephen Hendry 6-3, only the second time the world champion had lost this season.

TONY DOYLE, the former world pursuit cycling champion, is the new president of the British Cycling Federation. In a bitterly contested election, he beat Ian Emerson, president for the past 10 years, by 40 votes to 32 at the federation's national council meeting in Manchester.

BRITAIN'S Chris Boardman says he does not like cycling — the sport that brought him an Olympic gold medal. "I actually don't like cycling," he admitted in a radio interview. "I am a natural competitor and cycling is just the medium I have chosen." He said he plans to end his cycling career at the age of 32 in 2000 so he can try his hand — or feet — at something else. "Triathlons appeal to me a lot," he added.



Boardman: new interests

WIN some, loos some: Maureen Walton checked out the ladies' loos entries in The ABC Guide To Football Grounds and flushed out some interesting findings. "In the Premiership, women are well catered for but in the lower divisions the toilets were often like air-raid shelters with just two cubicles, which meant queues a mile long." Surely it's time for action to change the cistern!